DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 479 876 JC 030 481

AUTHOR	Robles, Stacey Y.
TITLE	The Influence of a Freshman Orientation Course on the Academic Performance and Retention of New Community College Students.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	155p.; Dissertation submitted to the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, for an Ed.D. in Educational Administration.
PUB TYPE	Dissertations/Theses - Doctoral Dissertations (041) -- Reports - Research (143) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*College Freshmen; College Students; Community Colleges; Educational Counseling; *Orientation; *Outcomes of Education; *School Holding Power; *Two Year College Students; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. The study was designed to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data. A survey was distributed to students who attended Coral College (a pseudonym), California, from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999, completed Guidance 10, and scored no higher than a level one or level two on two out of three of the assessment tests. Survey data was used to frame interview questions for the qualitative part of the study. Twelve students who completed Guidance 10 and returned a survey were interviewed. The survey consisted of fourteen questions, chosen to determine the effectiveness of Guidance 10. The three research questions the author posed were: (1) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance of new community college students? (2) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the retention of new community college students? and (3) What is the relationship between the objectives of the course and student outcomes such as GPA and retention? The author found that the course did not impact GPA, but did influence retention. Research instrument appended. (Contains 67 references.) (NB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 479 876

THE INFLUENCE OF A FRESHMAN ORIENTATION COURSE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION OF NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

Stacey Y. Robles

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S. Robles

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

A Dissertation Submitted to the

Faculty of the Graduate School

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

School: Gladys Benerd School of Education
Major: Educational Administration

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

TC030481

University of the Pacific
Stockton, California

2002

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE INFLUENCE OF A FRESHMAN ORIENTATION COURSE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION OF NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Copyright 2002

by

Stacey Y. Robles

THE INFLUENCE OF A FRESHMAN ORIENTATION COURSE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION OF NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

by
Stacey Y. Robles

APPROVED BY:

Dissertation Advisor: _____
Phyllis A. Hensley, Ed.D.

Committee Member: _____
Dennis C. Brennan, Ph.D.

Committee Member: _____
Stephen Davis, Ed.D.

Committee Member: _____
Kathryn K. Campbell, Ed.D.

Dean of the Benerd School of Education: _____
John M. Nagle, Ph.D.

Dean of Research and Graduate Studies: _____
Denis J. Meerdink, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Jesse and Marie Robles: I was blessed when I was born to such loving, caring, supportive parents. You both have been by my side throughout the good times and the bad. When I did not think I could make it to the finish line, you were there to cheer me on. You inspire me to find the happiness and love that you share together. More importantly, you encourage me to be the best parent I can possibly be. Words cannot express the deep respect, gratitude and love that I feel for both of you. My achievements are your achievements. Thank you.

To my daughter, Sophia Marie Mendoza, whom I love more than words can describe. My hope is that you will love learning and education as I have. I pray that you will be as happy as you are today. You are truly a gift from God and I am blessed to be your mother.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The truth is that life is delicious, horrible, charming, frightful, sweet, bitter, and that is everything. - Anatole France

This dissertation was a major accomplishment and experience that I have shared with my committee, family, friends and co-workers. I could not have completed it without the help of the individuals listed below.

Dr. Phyllis Hensley, Dissertation Chair, whom I am honored to have as my mentor and friend. You have inspired me to be a better student and professional. I thank you for your endless energy, enthusiasm and selflessness. I deeply respect you and feel fortunate that you came into my life to assist me with this great accomplishment.

Dr. Dennis Brennan: Thank you for being on my committee. I appreciated the time and energy you dedicated to help me complete this amazing task.

Dr. Steve Davis: Thank you for being available for my numerous questions. I have appreciated your expertise and knowledge. I am grateful for your guidance that kept me on track.

Dr. Kathryn Campbell: You have always been a role model for me as an administrator and as a person. You are gracious, kind and humble. I am thankful for having met you and that you agreed to be on my committee.

Amanda Robles: You have given me emotional support throughout this entire process. I feel lucky and blessed to have you as my sister and friend.

Amy Noel Pearce: You have been my biggest cheerleader from the beginning. Every time I wanted to give up you always said the right things to keep me going. You believed in me when I was struggling to make it to the finish line. I thank you for all your support.

Angelica Sepulveda: You have given me emotional support and took care of Sophia so that I could stay home and write. You have been a true friend and sister to me.

Barbara Robles Wallwork: You always made me feel proud of my accomplishments. You have been a positive energy in my life and seem to know me better than I know myself.

Mark Mekjavich: Thank you for your support during this laborious process.

Dee Brown: Thank you for your assistance with my research.

Gene Atwood: Thank you for doing the pilot study in your guidance class. It gives me great satisfaction to be a part of an institution with extraordinary faculty and staff. I am grateful for my position as a counselor.

THE INFLUENCE OF A FRESHMAN ORIENTATION COURSE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION OF NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Abstract

by Stacey Y. Robles
University of the Pacific
2002

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. This study was designed to obtain quantitative as well as qualitative data. In part one, a survey was distributed to students, who attended Coral College from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999, completed Guidance 10 and scored no higher than a level one or a level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. Survey data was used to frame interview questions for the qualitative part of the study. In part two, 12 students, who completed Guidance 10 and returned a survey, were interviewed to investigate in greater depth how the course did or did not influence them to stay enrolled in college. Interviews were used to give students the opportunity to share their stories and how their experiences in Guidance 10 influenced them to stay enrolled in college.

Data from the interviews suggested that a relationship between the course objectives and the respondents' grade point averages does not exist. However, the data

from the interviews indicated that there is a relationship between the course objectives and retention. Respondents identified particular aspects of the orientation course that influenced them to stay enrolled in college. Meeting with a counselor, going on a campus tour, learning time management, learning to speak in front of others, and learning about the potential earnings of a college graduate were aspects of the course that influenced students to persist in college.

Counselors and faculty are encouraged to continue to recommend this course to new students, and administrators are advised to ensure that there are a sufficient number of sections available for new students trying to enroll in the course. Finally, the institution must make a commitment to retention and investigate various methods to retain students through some type of orientation.

Recommendations are made for educators, who can make a difference in their educational institutions and influence change, which will affect the retention of new community college students.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION 1

Background of Study 1

Problem Statement 3

Purpose of the Study 3

Significance of the Study 4

Research Questions 4

Definitions 5

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 8

Historical Background 8

Design Elements of Successful Orientation Programs 11

Environmental Contexts of Two and Four-year Colleges 16

Variables Beyond Orientation that Influence Retention 18

Student Development Theories 24

Modifications to Orientation for Diverse Student Populations 27

Adult learners 27

Minority students 30

First-generation college students 34

Summary 35

III. METHODOLOGY 37

Nature of the Study..... 37
Quantitative Methodology..... 38
Survey design..... 38
Population and sample..... 38
Instrumentation..... 40
Data collection procedures..... 41
Data analysis..... 41
Qualitative Methodology..... 42
Qualitative design type..... 42
Population and sample..... 42
Instrumentation..... 42
Data collection procedures..... 43
Data analysis..... 43
Independent and Dependent Variables..... 44
Assumptions and Limitations..... 45
IV. FINDINGS..... 46
Introduction..... 46
Quantitative Data..... 47
Course objectives..... 47
Course outline..... 49
Background information..... 51
Summary of students' comments from surveys..... 53

Analysis of units, grade point averages and degrees..... 60

Qualitative Data..... 60

Barbara..... 61

Mario..... 66

Julia..... 72

Ron..... 75

Vanessa..... 77

Amy..... 79

Tanisha..... 82

Jamie..... 84

Valerie..... 86

Emma..... 89

Connie..... 91

Isabel..... 93

Summary of the Interviews..... 95

Personal data..... 96

Elements of a successful orientation class..... 96

The influence of Guidance 10 on retention..... 99

The influence of Guidance 10 on grade point average... 100

Variables beyond orientation that influence retention.... 100

Characteristics of an orientation course at a two-year college..... 103

Suggestions to improve Guidance 10 105

V. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION 107

Summary 108

Discussion 110

Elements of a successful orientation class 111

Variables beyond orientation that influence retention 114

Characteristics of an orientation class at a two-year college 114

Recommendations for educators 115

Suggestions for additional research 116

REFERENCES 118

APPENDICES

A. Survey of Guidance 10 Students 124

B. Interview Questions for Previously Enrolled Students 128

C. Interview Questions for Currently Enrolled Students 132

D. Credit Course Outline 135

E. Informed Consent Form Template 138

F. Students Who Did and Did Not Complete Guidance 10 140

LIST OF TABLES

Table | Page

1. Results From the Survey Responses of Part I, Course Objectives.....49
2. Results From the Survey Responses of Part II, Course Outline.....51
3. Results From the Survey Responses of Part III, Background Information.....53
4. Students Who Did and Did Not Complete Guidance 10.....141

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Student retention has been a longstanding issue in academia. Colleges have succeeded in recruiting students but have had a difficult time retaining students who are classified as nontraditional students. According to Copland (1989), traditional students are identified as eighteen to twenty-two years old, living on campus, and taking full time classes whereas adult learners or nontraditional students lack these characteristics. Marlow (1989) indicated that defining the typical nontraditional student is difficult. In addition, Marlow indicated that nontraditional students represent a very diverse group of older students. Nontraditional students are less likely to complete their degrees in comparison to traditional students because nontraditional students generally face more challenges (Glass & Garrett, 1995). Cook (1996) explained,

> Campuses of the nineties are radically different from those of past decades, and because of these changes it is increasingly important that new student orientation programs be implemented. Two-year colleges have experienced large increases in enrollments from groups of students that traditionally have not accessed higher education. (p. 3)

Populations, such as students with disabilities, minorities, displaced workers, and students from diverse socioeconomic classes, are now enrolling at two-year institutions in greater numbers than ever before (ACPA, 1994; Jacobs, 1993; Upcraft, 1993).

Furthermore, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) indicated that generally if a student is (a) from a lower socioeconomic class, (b) a minority, (c) academically under prepared, (d) physically challenged, (e) working, (f) living off campus, (g) without family stability or support, and (h) enrolled part time, he/she is more likely to drop out.

Blum and Spangehl (1982) suggested that all college students, particularly high-risk students, need a support system to help them to succeed in college. The most important factor that affects student persistence is involvement in the college academic environment (Astin, 1975). According to Tinto (1987), a student must have interactions with faculty, staff and other students to help the student develop a sense of "fitting in" and remain at the college.

In the state of California, community colleges created an orientation course in response to the need for students to have a support system. The course was developed to assist students with developing academic, personal and social skills to help them succeed in college. These courses create opportunities for students to integrate socially and academically into the college environment. Fralisck (1993) concluded that students who complete an orientation course are less likely to leave the college and have a higher grade point average (GPA) than those who do not take an orientation course. According to Fralisck, it is common for a community college to have a 60% dropout rate from one semester to the next. Furthermore, the best way to increase the freshman-to-graduate retention rate is to improve the performance of students in the first year.

The most critical transition period occurs during the first two to six weeks of the semester. According to Levitz & Noel (1989), of the students who drop out during the year, half drop out in the first six weeks. The authors concurred that a caring attitude of

faculty and staff is most crucial during this six-week period. Furthermore, the quality and responsiveness of faculty and staff may be the most powerful resources available for improving student retention and success.

Problem Statement

An increasing number of jobs in the 21st Century require college degrees. A college degree opens doors and increases the number of opportunities for jobs. According to the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (2000), students who have a high school diploma will make $22,272 per year while students with a four-year university degree will start out at $43,630 per year. Over a lifetime of working thirty years, a person with a high school diploma will only earn $609,000 while a college graduate will earn $1,421,000. The impact a college education can have on a person's potential earnings is evident. The difficult task at the community college level is retaining new students until they graduate with a certificate, associate's degree or transfer to a four-year university. Student retention at the community college level is a major problem. Students drop out for various reasons such as personal and social factors that are not related to academic factors. This study investigated the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study are useful to the following groups:

1. Administrators at community colleges struggle with finding ways to retain their students. Administrators are responsible for developing programs that retain students and help them graduate or transfer to a four-year university. Student retention at the community college level is a major problem that affects funding; therefore, it is imperative that administrators learn about programs that will retain students.

2. Counselors at community colleges are interested in ways to help retain students. The mission of most counseling departments is to help students to be successful by providing career, college and personal counseling. Counselors as well as teachers interact with students the most and potentially can make the biggest impact on retaining students.

3. Teachers at community colleges go into the teaching profession because they want to help students learn new information and be successful by graduating with a degree or transferring to a four-year university. Teachers are interested in learning about what they can do to help retain students as well as support them while they are enrolled at the community college. The findings of this study will assist teachers in understanding the role they play in retaining community college students.

Research Questions

This study focused on the following research questions.

1. What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance of new community college students?

2. What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the retention of

new community college students?

3. What is the relationship between the objectives of the course and student outcomes such as GPA and retention?

Definitions

Definitions are included to provide a common language and understanding of the terms used in this research study.

1. *Associate's Degree*: A degree (Associate in Arts or Associate in Science) granted by a community college which recognizes a student's satisfactory completion of an organized program of at least 60 semester units including the major and general education requirements (San Joaquin Delta College Catalog, 99-00).

2. *Certificate*: A certificate granted by a community college, which recognizes a student's satisfactory completion of an organized program of vocational study (San Joaquin Delta College Catalog, 99-00).

3. *Community College Student*: One who is enrolled in a course at an institution accredited to award the Associate in Arts or the Associate in Science as its highest degree (Cohen & Brawer, 1996).

4. *Freshman Success*: Progress a freshman student makes towards fulfilling his/her educational and personal goals by developing academic and intellectual competence, establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, developing an identity, deciding on a career, maintaining personal health and wellness, and developing an integrated philosophy of life (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989). The authors concluded that freshman success occurs when a student takes advantage of the college environment by developing his/her maximum potential.

5. *Full-time Student*: A student enrolled in 12 or more course units in a regular semester or four or more units during the summer session (San Joaquin Delta College Catalog, 99-00).

6. *General Education (GE):* A group of courses required to earn a degree, which provide a broadly based education (San Joaquin Delta College Catalog, 99-00).

7. *Grade Point Average (GPA):* An overall level of academic achievement used as a measure in making decisions regarding good standing, probation, disqualification, and dismissal, eligibility for graduation and transfer to four-year institutions. The grade point average is derived from the following unit system: A= 4 grade points per unit, B=3 grade points per unit, C=2 grade points per unit, D=1 grade point per unit and F=0 grade points per unit. The GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points received by the number of units attempted (San Joaquin Delta College Catalog, 99-00).

8. *Level 1:* For the purposes of this study, level one is equivalent to the skill level of a student with very basic skills.

9. *Level 2*: For the purposes of this study, level two is equivalent to the skill level of a pre-college student.

10. *Level 3*: For the purposes of this study, level three is equivalent to the skill level of a college student.

11. *Matriculation*: A process that brings a college and a student, who enrolls for credit, into an agreement for the purpose of realizing the student's educational objective. Primary components of matriculation are assessment, orientation, and counseling (San Joaquin Delta College Catalog, 99-00).

12. *Orientation*: Any effort by an institution to help freshman make a successful

transition from their previous environment to the college environment (Perigo & Upcraft, 1989).

13. *Persister*: A student whose transcript shows any final grade (A-F, CR, NC, I, W) for the beginning and subsequent semester (Anderson, 1999).

14. *Progress Probation*: This occurs when a student enrolls in at least 12 semester units and receives "W," "I," or "No Credit" in fifty percent or more of all of his/her units. (San Joaquin Delta College Student Handbook, 99-00).

15. *Retention*: For the purposes of this study, retention occurs when a student completes a certificate, Associate's degree or transfer requirements.

16. *Scholastic Probation*: This occurs when a student attempts at least 12 semester units and earns a grade point average below 2.00 in all the units that were graded (San Joaquin Delta College Student Handbook, 99-00).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of an orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. This chapter includes (a) an historical background on orientation, (b) design elements of successful orientation programs, (c) environmental contexts of two and four-year universities, (d) variables beyond orientation that influence retention, (e) student development theories, and (f) modifications to orientation for diverse student populations.

Historical Background

Until 1940, two-year colleges were known as junior colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 1989). Later, the term "community college" was used instead of junior college because the term represented a more comprehensive, publicly supported state institution (Cook, 1996). The number of two-year colleges increased from 70 junior colleges in 1900 to almost 1100 community colleges in 1971 (Thorton, 1972). The number of two-year colleges rose to 1,132 in 1998 (American Association of Community Colleges, 1998). The biggest impact that two-year colleges have had on American higher education is that they have increased access and enabled more people to attend college.

One reason for this increased enrollment in colleges was the passing of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance (Office of Civil

Rights, 2001). Furthermore, all federal agencies that provide grants of assistance are required to enforce Title VI regulation. The U.S. Department of Education gives grants of financial assistance to schools and colleges. An example of discrimination is racial harassment or school segregation. This law is important because it gives access to minority students, who did not have access to higher education in the past. Title VI ensures that minority students are treated fairly and receive appropriate services.

Another primary reason for increased enrollments was the passing of the GI Bill, which gave financial resources to individuals who returned from World War II (Cook, 1996). Education became available to people from all socioeconomic classes as well as those who were academically under prepared. With increased enrollment, administrators at community colleges had to identify services that were needed to support these new students.

College educators have been interested in orientation for over one hundred years. In 1888, Boston University offered the first orientation course (Gardner, 1986). By 1911, Reed College in Portland, Oregon offered an orientation course for academic credit. Many other colleges followed and by 1928, there were over 100 institutions offering courses (Fitts & Swift, 1928). In 1986, the Seymour-Campbell Matriculation Act mandated that California Community Colleges provide orientation for new students (Anderson, 1999). However, students, who have completed an associate's degree or higher and students enrolled in non-credit courses, are exempt from participating in matriculation.

In the early 1980's, John Gardner, a professor at University of South Carolina (USC) realized a new movement was taking place across universities and colleges in the

United States. "The Freshman Year Experience" coined by Gardner (1986) encouraged institutions to shift their resources, attention and effort to assist first and second year students rather than upper division students. According to Gardner, the freshman year experience movement began because of altruism, financial need of the institutions, increased attention to the poor quality of high school graduates and the need to fix the deficiencies in the first year of college as well as a list of other factors.

Gardner (1986) along with other educators from USC organized the first National Conference on the Freshman Year Experience, which was hosted in February 1983. The National Resource Center for the Freshman Year Experience at USC was established in 1988 to research and develop better programs to enhance the freshman year experience in colleges and universities. Then, USC created University 101, a freshman seminar course and received requests from colleagues throughout the country for information on how to develop a similar course. This freshman seminar has been used as a model for numerous orientation courses throughout the United States.

Data collected by the National Center for the Study of the Freshman Year Experience indicated that approximately 70% of American colleges and universities now offer some form of a freshman seminar course (Barefoot & Fidler, 1992). The idea of the freshman orientation seminar is not to replace the traditional orientation activities but to complement them (Cook, 1996). For many students, orientation seminars enhance the development of skills that are critical to their academic and college survival. Topics typically include such issues as note taking, time management, campus resources, test anxiety, study skills, career exploration, goal setting, and values clarification. A national study of extended orientation courses indicated that they are as common at two-year

colleges as at four-year universities. However, there were significant differences in the administration and the content of these courses. It was found that freshman orientation courses at two-year colleges frequently are larger, shorter in duration, less likely to be required, less varied in course content, and rarely used as an introduction to an academic discipline (Rice & Devore, 1992).

Design Elements of Successful Orientation Programs

Perigo & Upcraft (1989) defined orientation as any effort to help freshman make a successful transition from their previous environment to the college environment. Orientation programs may vary in length, timing and content, but most institutions provide new students with information on facilities, programs, and services. Furthermore, these programs give new students the opportunity to interact with faculty, staff and other new students.

Fralisck (1993) found that most students drop out of college during the first 3 to 6 weeks of school. This is a critical time when students are developing opinions about the college and whether they want to continue their education. Fralisck suggested that retention strategies might be most effective during this time. Noel, Levitz and Saluri (1991) found that half of the students, who left college, did not have significant contacts with counselors or teachers during the first three weeks. Research has demonstrated that the most critical factor in student retention is a caring attitude by faculty and staff (Tinto, 1989). Involvement in orientation is a simple way for faculty to make student contact and show a caring attitude to increase student retention.

The goals of orientation are to help freshmen succeed academically, develop and adjust to college life and show them how support, advice and encouragement from their

families can help them to succeed. Perigo & Upcraft (1989) developed a three-phase orientation model, which included (a) pre-admissions, in which prospective students are informed about the college, (b) pre-enrollment, which is a summer program for new students, and (c) initial enrollment, which are programs before the beginning of the semester throughout the first semester. Perigo & Upcraft concluded that to build a comprehensive orientation program the program must (a) be based on student development principles, (b) be appropriately timed, (c) include the students' families, (d) allow for interaction with faculty, staff and students, (e) introduce students to the academic demands of the college, (f) familiarize students to the campus including services, programs and facilities, (g) be coordinated by a central office, and (h) evaluated to determine the impact on freshman success.

According to Gass (1990) academic and social factors that should be included in orientation are: positive peer-group development, positive interaction with faculty, development of career goals, adequate preparation for college academics and compatibility with student expectations and course offerings. By including academic and social factors in orientation, a better "fit" between the institution and student is created. The odds of a student staying at an institution increase when there is a good "fit" between the student and the institution.

University 101, the course created by Gardner (1986), is the most well-known freshman orientation course. The University of South Carolina conducted research over a fourteen-year period tracking freshmen that took the course (Bianchino, 1994). The study concluded that students, who took the course during this period, had a higher persistence rate. The difference between nonparticipants and participants was

statistically significant in lowering the dropout rate among freshmen. According to Fidler and Hunter (1989), academic achievement, which was measured by cumulative grade point average, did not change significantly as a result of the course. Since the course was not required for all students it was generally composed of students with poorer academic skills (Bianchino, 1994). Most college freshman orientation courses are modeled after the University 101 course; however, each institution makes the course unique to fit their student population.

In the freshman year experience programs, institutions attempt to provide an environment that welcomes, celebrates, and assimilates freshmen while in the process attempts to give each freshman a mentor or caring adult at the institution (Gardner, 1986). Gardner suggested that a seminar course should include: (a) an introduction to higher education, (b) continuing orientation, (c) academic survival skills, (d) a support group, (e) an opportunity to make friends, (f) a mentor, (g) improving students' attitude towards faculty, (h) career counseling, (I) making freshman feel significant, (j) generating enthusiasm for the institution, and (k) information about opportunities and requirements at the university.

Gordon and Grites (1984) suggested that a freshman seminar course should help students understand: (a) the roles they will play as students; (b) why they are in college; (c) career and life goals; (d) information about academic programs; (e) occupations related to their educational choices; (f) time management and study skills; and (g) college procedures, resources and services. They indicated that each institution is different and should make these decisions based on the unique needs of the college.

According to Fralisck (1993), it is imperative that orientation provides an

opportunity for students to explore career options and receive assistance with career decision-making. A college orientation course is a way to provide a more in-depth opportunity for student self-exploration and career goal setting. Finally, an orientation course should include a "realistic picture" of the demands of college study time in order for students to balance their schedules and be successful. For example, students who work full time should be advised to take part time classes. Students who work full time should be advised to take part time classes.

Shanley and Witten (1990) suggested that a freshman seminar course should be designed to provide students with caring, student-centered instructors in small classes that include an orientation to the university, a place to interact with peers, a setting for exploring their values, information on extra-curricular and academic activities as well as student services. The class should be 20 to 25 students and focus on getting students involved in class activities. The class goals should be that students learn about themselves, their campus and the value and meaning of higher education.

Schwitzer, McGovern and Robbins (1991) found that participation in a freshman orientation seminar was associated with improved academic and social adjustment. Baker, McNeila and Siryk (1985) found that entering freshmen expect more from the college experience than they will actually realize. In addition, Baker, McNeila and Siryk reported that the freshman seminar was a useful intervention model for promoting first-year adjustment. Their freshman seminar model included two components: providing realistic information about the transition to college and creating a socially supportive environment. Baker, McNeila and Siryk stressed the importance of providing information to students along with a supportive, interactive environment, which could

boost students' adjustment significantly.

In any freshman orientation course, it is critical that the student feel in control of his/her environment (Stupka, 1986). Thus, each student is required to create his/her Student Education Plan by meeting with a counselor and mapping out the required courses to obtain his/her educational goal. Bianchino (1994) explained that:

> An orientation course helps students in the following areas: understand his/her placement test scores and whatever remedial course work may be needed as prerequisites; the graduation requirements for various transferable and nontransferable degree programs; how to use the college catalog as a guide to course selection; and how to seek assistance about college transfer or career development issues as needed. Students also need to feel informed of the policies, procedures, and resources that exist on the campus. Students should also be aware of tutoring, counseling, financial aid, student government, advisement and even child care services. Each student should know how to use these services should the need arise. A clear understanding of basic college policies concerning probation, deadlines for schedule changes and course withdrawals, and classroom attendance is also clarified and made the responsibility of the student. (p. 7)

Fidler and Hunter (1989) indicated that freshman seminars had a positive influence on retention. In addition, they reported that the relationship students had with their professors made them more satisfied with their college experience and more likely to return the next semester. Tinto (1985) and Terenzini and Pascarella (1977) stressed the importance of integrating freshman into the campus social system. Seminar courses are a way to integrate students into campus life and assist with their transition to college. Their

research suggested that faculty-student relationships, communication skills, and study habits might be positively associated with improved freshman academic performance.

The instructors of freshman seminars should help students develop as well as teach them concepts and information about the college. The philosophy of a freshman seminar course should be that learning is exciting and fun. In addition, the course should provide the opportunity for the students and instructors to learn. The goal of the course is to get students involved in the class and "turn them on" to learning. When students are excited about learning the instructor becomes excited and the cycle begins.

Students, who develop holistically, are more likely to survive their freshman year, have a more meaningful college experience and become mature adults. Fidler and Hunter (1989) suggested that the course must begin with activities that make the class become a "home base" for the students through activities such as name chains, lifelines, and values-clarification exercises. The instructor must self-disclose and encourage participation by being the "guinea pig" and going first in the activities.

Next, the instructor should cover essential topics such as study skills, library research, career planning and writing techniques. The pedagogy should be a combination of didactic, experiential and interactive in order for students to stay interested in the course content. Finally, the framework of the course should be based on Chickering's (1969) student development model, which helps students to grow academically, vocationally, socially, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Environmental Contexts of Two and Four-year Colleges

Feldman (1993) explained that most research on retention is done at the baccalaureate level and at institutions with residential facilities; consequently, retention at

community colleges is not well understood. Feldman believed that there were "preexisting factors" that determined which students were most likely to drop out. Furthermore, she indicated that students at a community college were different than students at a four-year university, therefore factors associated with retention and attrition would be different. Feldman stated, "the mission of the community college and the type of students admitted are, in many cases, substantially different from four-year institutions. Thus, it might be expected that the factors associated with attrition/retention would operate differently" (p. 504). Feldman found that there is no one model that is applicable to all institutions. Additional research should done at the community college level to identify factors that are unique to that setting.

According to Brooks-Leonard (1991), students, who attend community colleges, are much more likely to attend college part-time versus students, who attend a four-year university. The author concluded that community college students are more likely not to return to college. Brooks-Leonard found that students, who attend college on a full-time basis, return at a much higher rate than those who attend part-time. She examined the interaction between student demographics (full-time/part-time status) and academic factors. Working more than part-time and attending college part-time reduce the chances for students to interact with others and become involved in extra-curricular activities. Moreover, the probability that these students will fully integrate into the campus culture decreases.

According to Glass and Garrett (1995), community college students have a higher drop out rate than students at a four-year university because community colleges have low admissions requirements, are public, two-year colleges and nonresidential.

Furthermore, the authors explained that a typical community college student has special characteristics that are associated with higher attrition. The authors indicated that some of these characteristics are low socioeconomic status, low Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, low high school grades and a low level of educational goals. Furthermore, community colleges have fewer opportunities for students to integrate into the college culture. Many of the students are commuters who have little contact with faculty or students at the college (Tinto, 1987).

Variables Beyond Orientation that Influence Retention

There are many variables beyond orientation curriculum that influence student retention rates such as nonacademic variables. Several studies have shown that nonacademic variables predict college adjustment outcomes better than academic ability variables. According to Martin, Swatz-Kulstad and Madson (1999), these nonacademic variables are social (parental separation), personal-emotional (coping style), and institutional attachment. Furthermore, Tinto (1987) reported that academic performance is not the only factor that attributes to students leaving college. He found that nearly 85% of students leave college for reasons other than their academic performance. Programming aimed at retaining students may help prevent attrition when it is due to poor college adjustment.

Pascarella and Terenzini (1979) found that social isolation was the most important predictor of student dropouts rather than academic performance. Wilder (1983) found that negative attitudes and perceptions about the college environment along with other factors made students want to drop out of college. Finally, Wilder concluded that students with little personal contact with teaching faculty felt alienated and thus caused

them to want to drop out.

Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (1994) found that emotional and social adjustment factors were better predictors of student drop outs rather than academic adjustment factors. For students not struggling academically, contact with professors, satisfaction with courses and a sense of self-confidence were the best predictors of student persistence. Johnson (1997) found that undergraduates, who stayed in college, had positive perceptions of the campus and the faculty. These students felt that they were able to interact and get to know the faculty.

For students struggling academically, the best predictors were satisfaction with extracurricular activities, freedom from anxiety and absence of thoughts about dropping out of college. Extra-curricular activities or out of the classroom experiences may influence students to persist at their institution.

According to Upcraft and Gardner (1989), institutions can help freshman achieve their academic and personal goals by offering supportive and challenging classroom experiences as well as out of classroom experiences. In addition, freshmen must be committed to becoming involved in extra-curricular activities, which is the key to freshman success (Astin, 1985). McGrath and Braunstein (1997) concluded that first-year students' impressions of the college environment were important factors to be considered when a student decided to stay at a university.

Rickinson and Rutherford (1995) identified common concerns of students, who were having a difficult time adjusting: inability to engage with the new environment, perceptions of the university as threatening, and lack of confidence in one's ability to cope with new personal and academic demands. The results of their study indicated that

students, who felt as though they were receiving adequate support from their environment, tended to do better in terms of adjustment.

Academic self-confidence is significant to the adjustment of first-year students. Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (1994) found that a student's sense of self-confidence was an important predictor of student persistence. Not all students come to college prepared to persist and succeed. Colleges need to be aware of students' motivation, academic preparedness, and belief in their own abilities.

College counselors are an important variable that may positively influence student retention. There is evidence that freshmen, which used counseling services, were more likely to succeed in college than those who did not (Churchill & Iwai, 1981; Bishop, 1986; Walsh, as cited in Rayman & Garis, 1989). They play an important role in helping students develop academic and social skills that can make them more successful in college and feel that the college is meeting their needs. Counselors meet the needs of freshmen by providing personal, academic and career counseling.

Rayman & Garis (1989) recommended that there should be a broad range of delivery modes such as: (a) walk in counseling offered eight hours per day, five days a week, with backup crisis intervention services; (b) individual counseling appointments; (c) small group counseling with topics changing based on student need; (d) credit courses dealing with personal, educational and career development issues; and (e) computer assisted assessment and guidance. Finally, the primary focus of college counseling is to guide student development not provide long term counseling services.

At the community college, many students are unaware of or unable to take advantage of counseling services because they work during the day. Generally, students,

who work full-time and attend classes part-time, are too busy to seek out counseling. Some of these students may not know that counseling exists or counseling may not be accessible to them the nights when they are not working or taking classes. Therefore, counselors need to be available at night to meet with evening students. Counselors should attend evening courses and introduce counseling services to students, who take classes in the evening. Finally, counselors play a major role in helping students achieve academic self-confidence, positive attitudes towards the university and faculty interaction that can increase the probability of students having a more successful adjustment to college.

In 1984, a report entitled *Involvement in Learning: Realizing the Potential of American Higher Education* recommended "front-loading" freshman curriculum by providing more resources and quality teachers in introductory classes to help retain freshmen (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989) and positively influence retention. Astin (1985) recommended that students should have opportunities to interact with faculty, staff, and other students, which will help them to succeed and persist in college. Faculty involvement is vital to freshman success; consequently, faculty must teach freshmen classes and become involved with students when they arrive on campus.

College administrators can have the biggest influence on student retention by making a commitment to retention efforts and providing necessary funds to support programs aimed at student retention. Tinto (1987) argued that institutions must make a commitment to student retention. Upcraft and Gardner (1989) recommended that institutions develop a clear definition of freshman success, commit to a set of beliefs that create opportunities and understand the variables that affect freshmen success. Finally,

the university's mission should be to develop and nurture its students (Jewler, 1989).

In Feldman's (1993) study, there were four factors that were significant in predicting and influencing student retention rates. The strongest predictor was high school grade point average (GPA). The lower the high school GPA the higher the probability the student would drop out. Also, students in the age range of 20-24, minorities, and part-time students had higher drop out rates. These students were identified and guided towards special programs to help retain them.

According to Astin (1975), academic skills not only affected poor coursework, but also affected the students' relationships with other students and faculty. Astin revealed that students with poor academic skills were less likely to continue in college, improve their skills and implement their college goals in comparison to students who were involved in extra-curricular activities. Astin defined uninvolved students as students who came to campus only to attend classes, devoted minimal effort to their studies and centered their lives on persons or events outside of college.

Upcraft and Gardner (1989) argued that to understand freshman success one must understand the influence of pre-enrollment variables such as the influence of their backgrounds, characteristics and experiences before college, which can negatively affect retention. They believed that intellectual ability and prior academic achievement were the greatest indicators of freshman success. Other important variables were motivation, values and emotional stability. Finally, Upcraft and Gardner suggested that institutions that were committed to student development should develop policies, make decisions and allocate resources to enhance freshman success and reduce attrition.

Fralisck (1993) found that unsuccessful students, who dropped out of Cuyamaca

College, were more likely to have academic, personal, financial, health and child-care problems compared to successful students. In addition, 36% of these unsuccessful students worked more than forty hours per week. Finally, significant differences were found in students, who had a definite goal or major, versus students without goals. Sixty-six percent of the successful students had a goal, whereas only 53% of the unsuccessful students had definite goals.

Another variable, which may influence retention rates in a negative way is when students do not "fit" with an institution. Cope and Hannah (1975) emphasized the importance of matching the characteristics of an institution with its students. They explained that discrepancies between the two lead to attrition. When the student does not "fit" with the institution he/she may leave.

Noel (1985) examined how a campus wide effort to promote student success, satisfaction and retention was dependent on a people-oriented approach that emphasized the careful selection and encouragement of teachers and staff members who paid attention to students' individual talents to counter attrition. Noel suggested that institutions work together and market the benefits of higher education to prospective students. He recommended that institutions seek quality in education by selecting, nurturing and rewarding faculty, advisers and other staff who are committed to creating a quality environment for students. Finally, Noel concluded that when students feel like they are learning, growing, developing and maturing they keep returning each term.

Recommendations from previous research suggested: (a) better orientation programs; (b) efforts to help freshmen understand what scholarship and intellectual pursuits were about; (c) an orientation course for academic credit; (d) special priority for

part-time and nontraditional students; and (e) increased faculty-student interaction. Factors, other than the freshman seminar course, that contributed to the success of students were: advising, learning assistance, mentoring, counseling, campus activities and programs designed to enhance character development (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989).

Student Development Theories

Tinto's (1975) model is useful for providing insight into the factors that influence a student to leave college. Tinto's theory of student departure is based on the work of Spady (1970). Tinto's model was based on the interactive factors between the individual and the institution and the importance of student integration into the social and academic life of the institution. Tinto theorized that students enter college with several pre-entry attributes such as: (a) family background, skills and abilities; (b) prior schooling; and (c) varying degrees of commitment to their goals.

These intentions and commitments are modified and change continuously through a series of interactions between the student and the structures as well as members of the academic and social systems of the institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Positive and rewarding interactions with the formal and informal academic and social systems of the institution lead to student retention.

Basically, Tinto (1987) argued that students who were integrated into the social and academic life of the institution tended to stay at the institution. Tinto's theory focused on traditional student populations, ages 18-21 at residential institutions. Tinto maintained that institutions must be able to understand the patterns of student attrition at their own institutions in order to improve their retention rates.

Orientation programs should be based on student development theories, which

provide a framework for the programs. Chickering's (1969) developmental theory is useful as a framework for an orientation course or program because he described seven vectors or tasks students struggle with during college, which is helpful in understanding how college students develop. As students complete these tasks, they become integrated into the campus community.

His theory is useful for evaluating how to improve orientation programs because his theory emphasizes student development and the different vectors students go through. The model developed by Chickering can be used to explain the social reasons that account for students dropping out of college. By assessing these social factors, educators may be able to design programs that support students and help them to persist.

Chickering's (1969) model was developed from a longitudinal study of thirteen small colleges. The first assumption of Chickering's model was that students needed to complete the first three vectors (managing emotions, developing competence and developing autonomy) in order to move onto the others. Generally, first and second year students are moving through the first three vectors and venturing into the fourth vector (establishing identity) by their junior and senior years of college. Chickering believed that a college student's main task is to develop his/her identity. The research on the vectors is limited to students aged 17-25 in the 1960's. However, there are developmental similarities in college students of all ages as well as similarities between students in the 1960's and 1990's.

Chickering's (1969) theory was developed based on the assumption that there was movement between the vectors. A student's direction in the vectors was not linear. For example, a student may learn to manage his emotions then skip to developing autonomy.

Students did not move from one vector to the next and a student could be in more than one vector at a time. Finally, adolescents became adults as they developed and progressed through the seven vectors.

New college students are involved in many developmental tasks such as becoming independent, developing competence and developing interpersonal skills. According to Gordon and Grites (1984), as they confronted these adjustment tasks they needed assistance such as counseling. Furthermore, relationships with instructors and counselors gave students support during their development. For example, when students developed autonomy and disengaged from their parents they depended on teachers and counselors for encouragement. Instructors and counselors served as mentors and role models for students by sharing their life experiences and knowledge as they developed their identities and tried to find purpose and meaning in their lives. These relationships with instructors, counselors and peers improved student retention.

During college, students go through a process of "differentiating and integrating thought and behavior in each of the seven vectors" (Chickering, 1969, p. 86). Furthermore, learning and developing occur as students encounter new conditions and experiences. Chickering revealed that "expressions of discomfort and signs of upset are not necessarily negative. There is evidence that fruitful encounters are occurring" (p. 332). For example, if a student is experiencing discomfort with his new political beliefs this can be a healthy, growing experience for the student since he is questioning his beliefs and developing as a person.

The college environment is like a bridge that connects adolescents to adulthood. College creates an environment for adolescents to learn life skills and become adults.

Educators can improve orientation programs by setting up activities that help students move through Chickering's various vectors as they mature into adults. Levitz and Noel (1989) suggested that to improve freshman persistence the institution must focus on helping students make an academic, social and personal adjustment to college. Therefore, the institution must provide programs that help students connect to the college environment, make the transition to college, work toward their academic and career goals as well as succeed in the classroom.

Finally, Levitz and Noel (1989) concluded that when institutions helped freshmen explore their talents and develop career goals, freshmen learned skills that carried them through their sophomore year and beyond. Although Chickering's (1969) developmental tasks can be used as a framework to improve orientation programs, modifications need to be made to programs that include adult learners, minorities and first-generation college students.

Modifications to Orientation for Diverse Student Populations

Adult learners

Chickering's (1969) theory is useful in evaluating how to improve programs for traditional as well as non-traditional students. His theory demonstrated how students go through vectors or stages of development that help them to become adults. Although adult learners are older than traditional students, many of them have not gone through Chickering's developmental stages. According to Gordon & Grites (1984), nontraditional students' tasks may be similar to traditional students but other priorities in their lives may influence their commitment to become involved in the college experience. These priorities may impact their ability to persist in college.

Some nontraditional students struggle with similar tasks that the traditional students deal with such as developing one's identity. While in college, many nontraditional students play numerous roles in their lives and experience a conflict between their home and school roles. They are confused about who they are and who they want to become. Finally, many students experience frustration as they try to focus on a career goal but have scattered interests. Counselors can be used to help nontraditional students with career decision-making and support them as they reshape their new identities.

Nontraditional students learn to become autonomous like traditional students. Traditional students are developing autonomy and by becoming independent from their parents, whereas nontraditional students are developing autonomy by becoming independent from their roles as parent and spouse. Nontraditional students learn to integrate their roles of spouse, parent and student. Finally, they develop competence like traditional students.

Many nontraditional students may experience a lack of confidence in their abilities. They are insecure and have low self-esteem because they have not been in school for a decade or longer. Many times, they have to take remedial courses to refresh their math, reading and writing skills. Traditional students generally come to college more prepared than nontraditional students since most of them recently graduated from high school.

The needs of nontraditional students should be taken into consideration when administrators create class schedules and develop programs. For example, a variety of classes and orientations should be offered at night and on the weekends to accommodate

the schedules of this student population. Internet courses are gaining popularity with this population thus orientation courses should be accessible via the Internet. Consequently, these students can access the information whenever it is convenient for them.

According to Gordon and Grites (1984), nontraditional students need more initial contact and guidance if they are to survive at an institution. Gordon and Grites found that freshman seminar courses are an effective way of providing structure and support for nontraditional students. The importance of freshman seminar courses has increased because today's students are older, come from different vocational backgrounds, and attend part-time; therefore, they need a more complete introduction to the college. Traditional students came to college from high school therefore they were better prepared for college academically than today's diverse student body. The freshman seminar course helps students feel more comfortable and a part of their new environment, which may be perceived as strange or threatening (Gordon & Grites). Students learn to identify and understand the academic, personal and social growth that they are about to experience in college.

Naretto (1995) examined the influence that internal and external communities within an institution had on adult student persistence. Studies on retention of nontraditional students illustrated that persisters in college generally were enrolled full-time and that external influences usually were the cause for nonpersistence (Swift, as cited in Naretto, 1995). Persisters were more involved in campus life, which is consistent with Tinto's (1987) theory that students involved in campus life tend to stay in college (Brown, as cited in Naretto, 1995). Furthermore, persisters were more committed to their goals than nonpersisters. Naretto (1995) examined and confirmed Tinto's theory that

academic progress along with students' membership in a supportive community determined if students completed their degrees.

Finally, Naretto (1995) found that membership in a supportive community is important in determining persistence in nontraditional students. Tinto (1987) believed the college is the primitive supportive community but if the college community is weak, support from an external community such as the student's family is necessary to keep them in college. Orientation programs should include the student's family so that the spouse and children feel a part of the student's experiences and learn to support the new student. As the number of adult learners, who return to college, increases, orientation programs need to be modified to meet their specific needs.

Minority students

College administrators have focused on developing programs to ease the transition to college for students from high school to college to reduce attrition rates (Hurtado, Carter & Spuler, 1996). However, only a few studies have focused on the transition experiences of Latino students, which is one of the fastest growing student populations.

Weissman, Bulakowski and Jumisko (1998) examined the difference in the transition process to community college for Black, Hispanic and White students. Most of the research on student transition to college has focused on students at four-year institutions. For example, the model developed by Tinto (1987), relating to student persistence, has been primarily tested on students at four-year institutions. Tinto's model emphasized the importance of academic and social integration within the college community. Tinto argued that students, who were more involved and connected to their

classes, fellow students and campus were more likely to persist. Furthermore, those students, who did not feel like they fit in, were more likely to leave the institution. These students felt isolated and were not involved in any part of the college.

Although most college students experience feeling of loneliness and isolation, these feelings can be more significant for minority students. Weissman, Bulakowski and Jumisko (1998) further indicated that many African-Americans have felt devalued by American schools because of negative stereotypes related to their intellectual ability. In addition, Hispanic students have had to deal with negative stereotypes that affect their adjustment to college. For example, the authors indicated that Hispanic students felt like they did not fit in at four-year universities because "they perceive a climate where the majority of students think all minorities are special admits" (p. 20). This is especially detrimental because during college students are developing their identities.

If minority students have low self-esteem this affects their ability to develop competence. Furthermore, minority students are learning to manage their emotions and may experience feelings of fear, anxiety, shame and anger, which prolong their development in this area. Weissman, Bulakowski and Jumisko (1998) found that Black and Hispanic students experienced high levels of discrimination and harassment that affected their transition to college. However, these perceptions of prejudice did not impact their persistence.

The factors that most affected academic success were encouragement from parents and positive interactions with faculty and staff. Positive experiences within and outside the classroom have the biggest impact on these students and can enhance their self-esteem, give them confidence in their academic abilities and validate their

knowledge and experiences. Weissman, Bulakowski and Jumisko indicated that students shared many of the same experiences though their transition differed by ethnicity in regards to enrollment difficulties, academic adjustment and feeling of fitting into the college environment.

Finally, Weissman, Bulakowski and Jumisko (1998) reported that the faculty played a critical role in creating positive classroom experiences for the students. Orientation should include information on what it takes to succeed in college as far as study time, opportunities for students to feel validated, and consider students from different backgrounds and experiences when creating these programs. Moreover, faculty should be involved in orientation, especially faculty from similar backgrounds as the students.

Quintana, Vogel and Ybarra (1991) concluded that Latino students who were familiar and comfortable with Anglo culture experienced less stress in universities that were dominated by Anglos. Students needed to be comfortable with their own heritage and familiar with their culture and roots of identity to establish their identity. The authors found that there were specific stressors such as experiences of discrimination that affected Latino students' transition to college.

These experiences had a depressing influence on this population's feelings of attachment to the university. Furthermore, the authors reported that to ease racial tensions and to develop a better understanding between the different racial groups, there should be opportunities for students from different racial backgrounds to discuss their perceptions, misconceptions and achieve a better understanding of each other through

intergroup dialogue. Programs need to be developed that increase communication between the student groups instead of requiring the Latinos to "integrate" themselves into the campus life.

Quintana, Vogel and Ybarra (1991) indicated that academic counselors played an important role in facilitating Latino students' academic adjustment and transition to the university. Students who perceived a student-centered faculty and had opportunities to interact with faculty were more likely to be academically adjusted to college. The support of their family was another important aspect of their college adjustment. Generally, Latino culture tends to be close knit thus achieving autonomy is much more difficult for these students than for Anglo students. Students, who maintained their independence but also had a supportive relationship with their parents, had an easier transition to college. Orientation programs should include their parents in order for them to learn about the college and be supportive of their students.

Although many Hispanics students may go through orientation, they tend to have a poor student retention rate. The factors associated with poor Hispanic student retention are varied (Nora & Rendon, 1996). Nora and Rendon reported that under-representation of minority and low socio-economic students begins at the high school level, in which Hispanics have lower high school graduation rates than Whites. Therefore, Hispanic high school students are less likely to attend college compared to White students. The authors indicated that other factors are attributed to high dropout rates and low levels of college participation among Hispanics which include: poverty, unemployment, poor quality of education at inner-city schools, low student/faculty interaction, the absence of role models, lack of commitment to educational goals, and lack of academic preparation in

reading, writing and math. Finally, the authors concluded that Hispanic students, who were committed to attending a two-year college and had educational goals enrolled in more semester units, were more satisfied with their educational goal attainment, and earned some form of credential. Students, who develop a purpose and goals, tend to be more successful in college.

According to research by Nora and Rendon (1996), social integration was not found to be a factor in retention and academic integration had only a slight influence on retention. The results of their study indicated that Federal Pell Grants had the biggest influence on retention. Many students had to drop out of college because they did not receive enough financial aid to cover their college costs.

Finally, poor student transfer rates may be attributed to a lack of commitment to the goal of transferring or not setting educational goals because of a lack of information about what it takes to complete a four-year degree. Community colleges need to provide assistance and information to help students develop educational goals early in their college career. The rapid growth of minority students in colleges and universities has created many challenges as educators scramble to modify programs that will retain these students.

First-generation college students

According to Martin, Swartz-Kutstad and Madson (1999), special attention should be paid to first-generation college students and students who had difficulties graduating from high school. These students had the difficult task of learning college survival skills without the help of their parents since their parents did not have a college degree. Their families cannot give them the guidance in coping with college life therefore college may

seem foreign or hostile. Consequently, counselors play a significant role in helping these students adjust to college. Counselors can support and refer them to appropriate services on campus such as tutoring and financial aid. Mentoring programs should be set up that match up students with faculty and staff, who have similar interests, in order for the students to have a support person and role model on campus. Orientation programs need to be modified to meet the needs of this specific student group.

Summary

This literature review examined essential design elements of successful college orientation programs and environmental contexts of two and four-year universities were compared. Furthermore, variables beyond orientation curriculum that may influence student retention rates were discussed. In addition, a theoretical approach to evaluate how to improve retention programs as well as a theory to explain student departure was examined. Finally, modifications to orientation for specific populations were explored.

In the United States, many colleges and universities have some type of orientation program. Many of these programs have a similar philosophy, which is to nurture and assist new students with their transition to college as well as help them to develop. The orientation programs differ on how to accomplish this goal of providing students with a smooth transition to college life. Most of the research on orientation confirms that faculty-student contact can have a major impact on the retention of new students. Furthermore, if a college can convince students to stay during the first six weeks, students will persist in college.

Most of the research on orientation takes place at a four-year university. More research is needed at the two-year community colleges. Four-year and two-year colleges

have significant differences in the academic preparedness of their students as well as several other differences. These differences must be taken into consideration as educators develop orientation programs to meet the needs of their particular students.

There are multiple variables beyond orientation curriculum that may influence students' retention rates. Educators, who administer student retention programs, should examine these variables. Various studies and theorists have agreed that retaining students results from the interaction between students and faculty or staff at the institution. Although the information students receive at orientation along with the personal contact and interaction with other students has a positive impact on students' persistence and academic performance, orientation is not sufficient to increase student retention. Other variables beyond orientation must be taken into account when administrators are creating a student retention program.

Finally, Chickering's (1969) theory is useful in understanding students' development and the various vectors they go through. His theory is used to evaluate how to improve programs. With the increase in enrollment of adult learners, minorities and first-generation college students, programs must be modified to accommodate the needs of these specific student populations. These diverse student populations have different experiences than traditional students and these experiences must be examined. Therefore, educators should make changes and modify programs to meet the needs of special populations and ensure academic success for all students.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. This research study was designed to obtain quantitative as well as qualitative data. Part one consisted of survey generated quantitative data, to determine if there was a difference between the academic success and retention of new students at a community college, who completed Guidance 10 and students who did not complete Guidance 10. Part two was qualitative in nature. A sample of 12 students, who completed Guidance 10 and returned a survey, were interviewed to investigate in greater depth how the course did or did not influence them.

This study used multiple methods of data collection and analysis. It involved "between methods," drawing on qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures. Creswell (1994) indicated, "It is advantageous to a researcher to combine methods to better understand a concept being tested or explored" (p. 177). This study used a dominant-less dominant design. Creswell explained that in this type of model the researcher presents the study within a single, dominant paradigm with one small part of the overall study drawn from the alternative paradigm.

Quantitative Methodology

Survey design

Information about Guidance 10 students, who attended Coral College from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999, was collected from the campus database, Systems 2000. Data were collected on the students' assessment test scores, grade point average, units completed and degrees completed. Then, a survey (see Appendix A) was mailed to students, who took Guidance 10 and scored no higher than a level one or level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. The survey was cross-sectional, which according to Creswell (1994) means that the survey information is collected at one point in time.

The purpose of the survey was to obtain data on the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. A survey was used for this study because data could be collected rapidly and analyzed prior to the interviews. Therefore, interview questions could be modified based on the analysis of the surveys. Furthermore, according to Babbie (1989), "a carefully selected probability sample in combination with a standardized questionnaire offers the possibility of making refined descriptive assertions about a student body" (p. 254). Finally, Babbie indicated that surveys are flexible. The survey was administered to 98 students followed by 12 semi-structured qualitative interviews, which were used to elaborate or enhance the results from the survey.

Population and sample

This study was conducted at a community college located in Northern California. This community college is an accredited public, two-year community college. In order to guarantee anonymity, the name of the actual community college where the study took

place was changed to Coral College. This college serves approximately 20,000 day and evening students. Students attend the college for job re-training, certificate programs, associate degrees, transfer requirements to a university or personal enrichment.

The sample for the quantitative part of this study was selected based on specific research criteria. The criteria for the survey participants were that the students attended Coral College, completed the Guidance 10, Orientation to College course, and scored no higher than a level one or level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. As new students, they were assessed for basic skills in reading, math and composition then assigned a level placement in each subject area. Level one was the lowest score that students could receive and three was the highest with level two being average. Students took appropriate courses based on the levels they received. Level one courses did not count towards the associate's degree or transfer requirements. On the other hand, level two and three courses did count towards the associate's degree.

Students, who scored a level two and a level three on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests, were not included in this research study because it was assumed that students with average levels would graduate or transfer to a four-year university without the help of the guidance course. Participants in the study were selected from Guidance 10 classes that were taught the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999.

An equivalent number of new students, who did not complete the guidance course, was randomly selected and compared with students, who completed the course. Names of students, who did not take Guidance 10 and scored no higher than a level one or level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests, were accessed from Systems 2000. A random number table was used to select the thirty participants. Surveys were distributed

to the students, who completed the guidance course and scored no higher than a level one score and level two score on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests.

Instrumentation

The quantitative instrument used in this study was a fourteen-item questionnaire that was distributed to students who met the study's criteria. Part I consisted of seven items regarding the objectives of the course. Respondents were asked to rate each of these seven items on a Likert scale, with 1 representing the most negative response and 3 representing the most positive response: 1=Not At All, 2=Somewhat, 3=A Great Deal. Part II consisted of seven items related to the course outline. Respondents were asked to rate each of these seven items on a Likert scale, with 1 representing the most negative response and 4 representing the most positive response: 1=Poor, 2=Satisfactory, 3=Good, 4=Excellent. For the purposes of this study, "Poor" and "Satisfactory" responses are considered a negative response whereas "Good" or "Excellent" are considered a positive response. "Satisfactory" is defined as average or minimally acceptable whereas "Good" is defined as better than average and almost excellent.

Part III consisted of five items regarding background information of the respondents. Respondents were asked their gender, age, current self-reported grade point average, units completed and certificate, associate degree or transfer requirements completed. The items for each part were analyzed and reported on separately by using percentages of responses for each survey item. Comments from each item in part I were grouped together and summarized.

The items on the questionnaire were developed from the objectives of the course and the course outline, which included topics covered in Guidance 10 taught at Coral

College (see Appendix D). For example, one of the course objectives was: The student should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the admissions, assessment and registration process. Thus, the following statement was developed: You were able to demonstrate knowledge of the admissions, assessment and registration process.

Three counselors, who taught Guidance 10 reviewed the items on the survey for content and face validity. A pilot study was conducted. A counselor, who was teaching the course at the time, distributed the survey to his class. The surveys were examined and a few changes were made to the survey to make it easier to understand.

Data collection procedures

Written permission to access student information from Systems 2000 was obtained from the Director of Guidance and Counseling before the study began. Data were accessed from Systems 2000 on the students, who completed Guidance 10 from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999, as well as a randomly selected group of students who did not take Guidance 10. Data were collected on the students' assessment test scores, grade point averages, units completed and degrees completed for both sets of students, students who took Guidance 10 and students who did not take Guidance 10.

Then, a survey and consent form were mailed to the students, who took Guidance 10 and scored no higher than a level one or level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. Each student was mailed a consent letter (see Appendix E) requesting his/her participation in the study along with a copy of the survey.

Data analysis

Survey data were compiled and presented in a table format. Comments from the surveys were summarized in a narrative form. Data regarding grade point averages,

degrees completed, and units completed of students, who took Guidance 10 and students who did not complete Guidance 10, were summarized and presented in a table format (see Appendix F). Survey data were used to frame interview questions for the qualitative part of the study.

Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative design type

This study used a qualitative design type to study the influence of an orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students in depth and in detail. This study was a phenomenological study. Creswell (1998) defined phenomenology as "studying a problem by entering the field of perception of participants, seeing how they experience, live and display the phenomenon and looking for the meaning of the participants' experience" (p. 31). Furthermore, he indicated that the researcher should set aside his/her preconceptions to understand the phenomenon experienced by the participants.

Population and sample

The sample for the qualitative part of this study was a sub-sample randomly selected from the group of students who completed a survey and informed consent form. Twelve students, who completed the survey, were asked to sign an agreement to be interviewed and participate in the study.

Instrumentation

Interviews were conducted in this study to obtain a greater depth of information on how the course influenced the participants. Patton indicated that "personal growth and insight into self are difficult to operationalize and standardize" (p. 420) thus qualitative

methods such as interviews are used to evaluate these types of outcomes.

Interview questions for previously enrolled and currently enrolled students (see Appendix B and C) were used to guide the interviews. Patton (1990) described an interview guide as:

> A list of questions or issues that are to be explored in the course of an interview. An interview guide is prepared in order to make sure that basically the same information is obtained form a number of people by covering the same material. The interview guide provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject. Thus the interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style-but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined. (p. 283)

Data collection procedures

The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. The data were kept confidential by destroying the transcriptions and tapes after analysis of the data. Names and other identifying information were not used in the study.

Data analysis

Once full transcriptions of the interviews were completed, data analysis commenced. According to Creswell (1998), there are specific steps for analyzing data when using a phenomenological approach. First, the researcher reads all descriptions then extracts significant statements from each description. Next, the researcher

formulates the statements into meanings and these meanings are clustered into themes. Finally, the researcher integrates these themes into a narrative description.

Inductive analysis was used to answer the original research questions: (a) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance of new community college students; (b) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the retention of new community college students; and (c) What is the relationship between the objectives of the course and student outcomes such as GPA and retention? According to Patton (1990),

> Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis (p. 390).

Also, he explained that the search for patterns should be guided by the questions from the beginning of the study. Next, cross-case analysis took place, in which Patton described as, "grouping together answers from different people to common questio... nalyzing different perspectives on central issues" (p. 376). Finally, the data were interpreted, in which patterns were put into an analytic framework.

Independent and Dependent Variables

The independent variable in this study was the orientation course, which was evaluated to determine the influence of the course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. The dependent variables in this study were the academic performance and retention of new community college students, which was measured by students' grade point averages, units completed, and degrees completed.

Assumptions and Limitations

The researcher is an employee at Coral College and also teaches the Guidance 10, Orientation to College course. The treatment group, which consisted of students, who completed an orientation course, was self-selected. It is not known why these students chose to take an orientation course. According to Bianchino (1994), orientation courses that are not required of all students tend to be composed of students with poorer academic skills. Perhaps, students with poorer academic skills tend to sign up for the course if it is not mandatory. Thus, the differences in the outcome measures between the students, who took the orientation course and did not take the orientation course, may not be caused by the treatment itself (the orientation course) but due to other variables. For example, high achieving, academically prepared students may take an orientation course but their success and retention rates may have less to do with the attributes of the course than with their own motivation levels, knowledge base, or cognitive skills. Therefore, students who scored a level two or a level three on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests and completed the orientation course were not included in this study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. In this chapter, data from the surveys and interviews with former Guidance 10 students as well as data on the students, who did not take Guidance 10, are presented.

The first part of this chapter presents the findings of the surveys, which were mailed to 98 students, who took Guidance 10 from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999 and scored no higher than a level one or a level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. Eleven surveys were returned to the researcher without a forwarding address. Thirty surveys (30%) were returned with completed responses. The survey was divided into three parts: Part I, Course Objectives; Part II, Course Outline; and Part III, Background Information. The purpose of the survey was to obtain data that would help frame questions for the interviews.

The second part of the chapter presents the findings from the 12 interviews. Respondents were 12 students, who returned the survey, took Guidance 10 from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999, and scored no higher than a level one or a level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. A case study was written for each interview to illustrate each student's unique experience in Guidance 10. It was assumed that all of the students

were honest with their responses. The survey questions as well as interview questions were related to the purpose of the study, which was to investigate the influence of an orientation class on the retention and academic performance of new community college students.

Quantitative Data

The survey was used to obtain data on the influence of an orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. Respondents completed a fourteen-item questionnaire. Part I consisted of seven items related to the objectives of the course. Respondents were asked to rate seven items on a Likert scale, with 1 representing the most negative response and 3 representing the most positive response: 1=Not At All, 2=Somewhat, 3=A Great Deal. Part II consisted of seven items regarding the outline of the course. Respondents were asked to rate each of these items on a Likert scale, with 1 representing the most negative response and 4 representing the most positive response: 1=Poor, 2=Satisfactory, 3=Good, 4=Excellent. Part III consisted of five items regarding background information of the respondents. Respondents were asked their gender, age, current self-reported grade point average, units completed and certificate, associate degree or transfer requirements completed.

Course objectives

In the first part of the survey, respondents answered seven statements related to the objectives of the course. The majority of the respondents replied positively, "A great deal" or "Somewhat," to the seven statements with the exception of one respondent. There was only one negative response; a respondent indicated "Not at all" to the question regarding whether the student felt he/she had an entry level understanding of assessing

interests, values and skills relative to a career goal.

When respondents were asked if they benefited from the information presented, the majority of them (70%) indicated "A great deal." Thirty percent of the respondents answered that they benefited "Somewhat" from the information presented. The majority of respondents (93%) replied "A great deal" to the question that asked if they were able to access and effectively utilize the college catalog, schedule of classes and student handbook as well as other college publications. Seventy-three percent of the respondents marked "A great deal" when asked if they were able to make appropriate decisions relative to the development of a Student Education Plan. The remaining 27% responded that they were "Somewhat" able to make appropriate decisions regarding a Student Education Plan.

On the survey, students were asked if they were able to demonstrate knowledge of certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements; 60% indicated "A great deal" and 40% responded "Somewhat." Seventy percent of the students responded "A great deal" when asked if they were able to demonstrate an entry level understanding of assessing interests, values, and skills relative to an educational or career goal while 29% of the respondents replied "Somewhat" and one respondent indicated "Not at all." Finally, when asked if they were able to access and utilize the college catalog, schedule of classes, handbook and other college publications; 93% of the respondents indicated "A great deal" and 7% of the respondents indicated "Somewhat." Table 1 on the next page illustrates the results from the survey responses in Part I of the survey.

Table 1. Results From the Survey Responses of Part I, Course Objectives.

Part I. Course Objectives.	A Great Deal	Somewhat	Not At All
1. You benefited from the information presented.	70%	30%	0%
2. You were able to demonstrate knowledge of the admissions, assessment and registration process.	80%	20%	0%
3. You were able to make appropriate decisions relative to the development of a Student Education Plan.	73%	27%	0%
4. You were able to demonstrate knowledge of the certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements.	60%	40%	0%
5. You were able to demonstrate an entry level understanding of assessing interests, values, and skills relative to an educational or career goal.	70%	27%	3%
6. You were able to access and effectively utilize the college catalog, schedule of classes, student handbook and other college publications.	93%	7%	0%
7. You were able to access appropriate student student support services.	70%	30%	0%

Course outline

In part two of the survey, respondents replied to seven questions regarding the outline of the course. The registration information and meeting with a counselor to create a Student Education Plan appeared to be the most beneficial to the respondents since 63% of the respondents rated these two items "Excellent." In addition, 30% of the respondents

cited the registration information as "Good" while 27% of the respondents rated meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan as "Good."

Fifty percent of the respondents replied "Excellent" when asked about the student services and financial aid information, college survival skills and information on certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements. Moreover, 37% of the respondents rated the student services and financial aid information as well as the information on certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements as "Good." Finally, 30% of the respondents answered that the college survival skills were "Good."

Three percent of the respondents rated the campus tour as "Poor." Furthermore, only 37% of the respondents rated the campus tour "Excellent." Finally, the campus tour was the only question to receive a "no response" of 3%, which may be due to the instructor not taking his/her class on a campus tour. Table 2 presents the results from the survey responses of Part II on the next page.

Table 2. Results From the Survey Responses of Part II, Course Outline.

Part II. Course Outline.	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	No Response
1. Campus Tour	37%	37%	20%	3%	3%
2. Student Services & Financial Aid	50%	37%	13%	0%	0%
3. Information on Career Decision Making	47%	37%	16%	0%	0%
4. Student Education Plan & Meeting with a Counselor	63%	27%	10%	0%	0%
5. College Survival Skills	50%	30%	20%	0%	0%
6. Certificates, Associate Degrees & Transfer Requirements	50%	37%	10%	3%	0%
7. Registration Information	63%	30%	7%	0%	0%

Background information

The last section of the survey was self-reported information on the respondents' background. The majority of the respondents were female, with 22 female respondents and eight male respondents. The range of age for the respondents was 20-49 years old. The majority of the respondents (57%) were 20-29 years old. Twenty-three percent of the respondents were 30-39 years old and 20% of the respondents were 40-49 years old. The average grade point average, which was self-reported, for the majority of the respondents (33%) was a 2.6-3.0. Twenty percent of the respondents had a 1.0-1.9 grade point average, which is below a "C" average and puts the student on academic probation.

Finally, two students did not respond to this question.

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents answered that they completed 16-30 units and 27% of the respondents remarked that they completed 1-15 units. Seventeen percent of the students declined to state how many units they completed. Only one student completed sixty units or more. When respondents were asked how many completed a certificate, associate's degree or transfer requirements, 73% of the respondents did not answer this question. Only one student completed an associate's degree and one student completed the requirements to transfer to a university. A summary of Part III, Background Information, is depicted in Table 3 on the next page.

Table 3. Results From the Survey Responses of Part III, Background Information.

Part III. Background Information.

1. Sex:

   Males (8) Females (22)

2. Ages:

   20-29 (17) 30-39 (7) 40-49 (6)

3. Grade Point Average:

   1.0-1.9 (6) 2.0-2.5 (5) 2.6-3.0 (9) 3.1-3.5 (5) 3.6-4.0 (3)

   Declined to State (2)

4. Units Completed:

   1-15 (8) 16-30 (8) 31-45 (5) 46-60 (3) 60 or more (1) Declined to State (5)

5. Certificate, Associate Degrees and Transfer Requirements Completed:

   Certificate (4) Associate Degrees (3) Transfer Requirements (1)

   Declined to State (22)

Summary of students' comments from surveys

Under each statement on the survey, students were provided the opportunity to comment on each statement. As previously stated, thirty surveys were returned for this study. For item 1, which asked if students benefited from the information provided in the course, five respondents provided comments. In regards to item 1, the respondents

indicated that the information presented was extremely helpful. For item 2, students were asked if they were able to demonstrate knowledge of the admissions, assessment and registration process. Five respondents explained that the information on admissions, assessment and registration was beneficial and made attending college easier for a new student.

In item 3, students were asked if they were able to make appropriate decisions relative to the development of a Student Education Plan, eight students wrote comments. According to the majority of the respondents, the Student Education Plan helped them stay focused and select courses they needed for their academic programs. For item 4, six students responded to this statement, which asked if the student was able to demonstrate knowledge of the associate degree, certificate and transfer programs that lead to baccalaureate degrees. One respondent explained that she marked "Not at all" because she more than likely missed class when the instructor covered certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements.

In regards to item 5, five students responded positively that learning to assess interests, values and skills relative to a career goal was beneficial for them. Four respondents shared their comments on item 6, which asked if the student was able to access and effectively utilize the college catalog, schedule of classes, student handbook and other college publications. The majority of them indicated that they are able to access and utilize the catalog and schedule of classes effectively.

Finally, five respondents wrote comments for item 7. The majority of the respondents expressed that they are all aware of student services. One respondent explained that she was able to access services except for a math tutor.

Eleven respondents out of thirty wrote comments on the last question of the survey, which asked the students to comment on any aspect of the course that influenced them to continue their enrollment at Coral College. Five respondents explained that the course helped them. Two additional respondents commented that they are grateful for the assistance they received from their counselors. Another student expressed that Coral College was a great college for anyone to attend who would like to pursue a goal in life. A student, who withdrew from college, mentioned that the instructors were excellent and she/he plans to enroll in the future. Finally, two respondents indicated that although they are not currently enrolled, they plan to return to the college in the future. All of the comments from the surveys are listed below.

Part I: Course Objectives:

1. You benefited from the information presented.

   Comments:

   1. The orientation helped me greatly with my college career.
   2. Yes, I still have all my notes.
   3. The guidance office has been very helpful.
   4. The guidance class gave me a good knowledge on what is offered and what I could take advantage of.
   5. Extremely helpful.

2. You were able to demonstrate knowledge of the admissions, assessment and registration process.

   Comments:

1. It made things easier for me as a new student.

2. The orientation taught me everything I needed to know about Coral.

3.The counselors here at Coral College were excellent.

4. The knowledge comes in handy at my place of employment.

5. Definitely.

3. You were able to make appropriate decisions relative to the development of a Student Education Plan.

Comments:

1. It helped me stay focused on what classes to take for what I was studying.

2. Every single step was clear and helpful.

3. I kinda did a plan that worked, but when I decided to continue I messed it up, that's why I'm not in school now.

4. With the help of [instructor's name] and her class I was able to select the classes I needed.

5. Yes, I pick out my own classes and education then I ask a counselor for help.

6. I believe that I have.

7. Could be more informative.

8. I am able to follow my course without any confusion thanks to Guidance 10.

4. You were able to demonstrate knowledge of the associate degrees, certificates and transfer programs that lead to baccalaureate degrees.

Comments:

1. This is mainly because I had missed one or two days when the teacher probably went over this.

2. I messed up on trying to get my AA now I'm all messed up.

3. [Instructor's name] helped me to schedule the classes I needed for an AA.

4. Yes, this course made me feel more welcomed and comfortable at Coral.

5. I am hoping to transfer in three more years.

6. Knowledge is power.

5. You were able to demonstrate an entry level understanding of assessing interests, values and skills relative to an educational or career goal.

Comments:

1. I discovered a vast amount of careers related to my major.

2. I am still undecided but I still benefited from the class.

3. Everyone is really helpful.

4. Very good support in this area was given.

5. I have learned to evaluate my interests, values and skills regarding my educational and career goals.

6. You were able to access and effectively utilize the college catalog, schedule of classes, student handbook and other college publications.

Comments:

1. I have mastered the use of the class catalog.

2. The teacher dissected the catalog perfectly.

3. Yes, I look at the classes I need and I go from there.

4. I am able to understand and schedule my classes through the student handbook.

7. You were able to access appropriate student support services.

Comments:

1. Except a tutor for math.
2. I was able to access the appropriate student services.
3. The teacher let us be more aware of all the services she even gave me a better understanding of them.
4. All the time.
5. Guidance 10 helped me to be more aware of what services are available to me and my colleagues.

Please feel free to comment on any aspect of the course that influenced you to continue your enrollment at Coral College?

1. I think Coral College is a great community college for anyone and everyone out there. With my own experience I know Coral College is very helpful to those who come from a low income family and who would like to pursue a goal in life. I'm very proud of my decision to come and attend Coral College. People here are very friendly; I advise to newcomers that if they need any help with anything all they need to do is ask. It's that simple!
2. It was a good course and I gained a lot of useful knowledge on course planning and it erased a lot of confusion I would otherwise have had to deal with had I not took this course.
3. Since I took Guidance 10 I now know a lot of different courses and steps that I need to follow to obtain my degree. It was a great course that Coral has.
4. Knowing that if I need help with anything that my counselor or other student help official will help me get where I want to go.
5. Actually in 1999 I dropped out and had only received 1 unit. I re-enrolled in June

2001 to start over so I may successfully fulfill my goals.

6. I want to go back to school but I messed up my grades, now financial aid won't help me anymore. Thank you for your concern.
7. [Instructor's name] conducts her class very expertly and the class was very informative. I use the skills I learned still to this day. I still feel I can rely on [instructor's name] for all my academic situations. I am very grateful for all the help she has given me.
8. I thought it was a good course and it helped me to understand the courses I need to accomplish my goals. It made things a lot easier to learn in class than searching everywhere else.
9. At this time, I am not enrolled in any classes at Coral College. I do feel secure that Coral will continue to grow and offer great programs that in the future I can take part of. Thank you for selecting me as a participant in your study.
10. I enjoyed the courses I took and most of the instructors were excellent in their abilities to simplify course activities and information needed. I will probably enroll in the near future in hopes of obtaining my A.A. or B.A. degree.
11. Guidance 10 helped me to gain the knowledge regarding my decisions and choices. This course has helped me to be aware of the services that are available to all students. I am now able to schedule myself towards a career of my choice without any confusion. I am also able to help other students with locations and course direction. Thank you for giving us students Guidance 10.

Analysis of units, grade point averages and degrees

Data were accessed from Systems 2000 on the students who completed Guidance 10 from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999 and scored no higher than a level one or a level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. Surveys were sent to these 98 students and thirty surveys were returned. Therefore, a randomly selected group of thirty students, who did not take Guidance 10 and had low assessment levels, were selected from Systems 2000. Data regarding the students' grade point average, units completed and degrees completed were collected for both sets of students, students who took Guidance 10 and students who did not take Guidance 10.

Students who did not take Guidance 10 completed fewer units, obtained a lower grade point average and graduated with fewer degrees than the students who completed Guidance 10. Students who did not take Guidance 10 completed an average of 21 units, had a 1.58 grade point average and did not complete any degrees. Whereas, students who took the course completed an average of 25 units, earned a 1.93 grade point average and one degree. See Appendix E for the chart of students who did and did not complete Guidance 10.

Qualitative Data

Twelve students, who took Guidance 10 from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999 and completed a survey, were interviewed to collect additional data on the influence of an orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. Students were asked approximately twenty-one open-ended questions related to their experience in Guidance 10. According to Patton (1990), "The fundamental principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework within which

respondents can express their own understandings in their own terms (p. 290)." Moreover, Patton indicated, "the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind (p. 278)." Finally, the interviews were conducted in this study to share the stories of 12 students who took an orientation course at Coral College.

Respondents were asked approximately twenty-one questions related to the following research questions of this study: (a) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance of new community college students; (b) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the retention of new community college students; and (c) What is the relationship between the objectives of the course and student outcomes such as GPA and retention? The following are the narratives of the 12 interviews.

Barbara

Barbara was in her eleventh semester at Coral College. She began taking basic skills courses in the fall of 1996. During her five-year college career, Barbara indicated that her career goals have changed and, as a result, she has taken numerous courses. Barbara became interested in enrolling in college while she was in a drug rehabilitation center. When asked why she decided to enroll in college courses she responded,

> Well, the reason why is because I was in my addiction for many years, and then I ended up where I went to a rehabilitation center. It was...to help me with drugs. And I got a packet...I don't know how…and I filled it out and everything. So as soon as I got out, the first week that I got out, I came straight to...college and I was already enrolled and everything.

Barbara has reached one of her academic and career goals. She was awarded her

Associate's Degree in Business in 1998 and, at the time of the interview, was in the process of obtaining her certificate in data entry. She indicated that she always had been intrigued with office careers and she considered herself, "More or less an indoor person than an outdoor person." Barbara worked part time, 20 hours per week, and attended college part time, which was six units or less per semester.

During Barbara's first semester in the fall of 1996, she enrolled in Guidance 10. She reported that she did not have any other type of orientation prior to Guidance 10. When asked what she learned in this course that was useful, she initially had a difficult time remembering the course. When given the name of the instructor who taught the course in 1996, Barbara was able to recall what she learned. "It was a fun class. She explained to us just about entering into college, about financial aid, about the career center. If we need help we have a counseling office next door." When asked if she learned anything that was not useful, she reiterated that the course was very useful.

Barbara indicated that although learning about requirements for certificates, associate degrees, and transfer programs did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college, she considered this information helpful. Furthermore, she stated that she has benefited from student services and financial aid. According to Barbara, "It helped me because I didn't have [sic] no income, and I was able to utilize all those services to help me to continue on [in college]." Furthermore, she indicated that the Guidance 10 instructor was very helpful. "The instructor even let us know the in's and out's. What we can do and how we can go around to get it. If we had any type of problem, we could come back to her."

The career decision-making section of the course affected Barbara's decision to

stay enrolled in college. She found the field trip to the career center very beneficial.

> I didn't know we had so much access to different things in the college like this. And that was something exciting to me. They showed us what access we had in going over to the career center and the outlets we had to further our education. If we wanted to transfer, what opportunities we had. The career center played a lot in my life, as far as me being able to come to some type of goal that I wanted. It had a lot of things that helped me out.

Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan helped Barbara to stay enrolled in college. She mentioned, "...each time that I did my education plan, I followed them. And it helped me out a whole lot, because it kept me on the right track." When asked if learning study skills and time management affected her decision to stay in college, Barbara reported that these techniques helped her tremendously.

> It helped me just mainly to stay focused. It's very important to stay focused because if you drift away, then sooner or later you're going to say, 'I don't want to do that.' And I have to keep something in my life to keep me motivated. So I kept myself in some type of management mode to keep going.

In the course, the most important thing Barbara learned was to stay focused and manage her time, which helped her stay enrolled in college. She mentioned that she did not want to overwhelm herself.

> You see that's the whole thing when I first came; I didn't want to jump off where I was overwhelmed, where I would fail. I knew my situation and I knew that I had to bring my brain cells back to reality. So I knew better because I was determined.

In addition, Barbara reported that meeting with a counselor and checking her grades helped her to stay focused.

According to Barbara, the Guidance 10 class did influence her grade point average. She said, "Guidance 10 was the class that really started me going, kept me motivated." When asked what personal factors affected her decision to stay enrolled she remarked,

> Well, see I always wanted to be in business. I always liked office work. Taking these classes and then also working and experiencing the same that I was learning in classes kept me motivated. And see, like right now, I still want to take classes because there's a lot of things in the workplace that you need. I need to learn this and I need to learn that so I can get me a better job. Things...the other women know...I would like to learn; I need to go to school to learn it.

When asked if the guidance course helped her to feel a part of the campus social system, she stated that she already knew a number of people on campus and felt comfortable. However, she did mention that in the class, "Everybody was together." She was in a special guidance course designed for re-entry students. She said, "Everybody was all the same, so we related to each other...been out of school for so long...everybody in the class just clicked."

She explained her favorite part of the course,

> It's a great class. I would advise it to anyone even not necessarily re-entry students. Just to any new student that comes...I would advise for them to take that class because it makes you aware of the opportunities and everything that is available to you. And plus too in Guidance 10 you have the opportunity where

they introduce you to the career center where there are so many opportunities that are available to you, that will help you. So I would advise for everybody to take it.

There was nothing in the course that she did not like.

Barbara's guidance course was six weeks. She stated that she preferred the short-term course. Although Guidance 10 is not a required course, one of the counselors suggested that she take the course; consequently, she enrolled in the course. Her class had about twenty-five students. When asked how the size of the course influenced her learning in the class she responded,

> Usually when it's not that many, the teacher can focus on you and then with it being a smaller class, the teacher knows each one of you individually. Where if it was larger, she's not going to really focus on you because she has so many other students.

Barbara did not think that the course should be required but recommended to new students. She did not have any suggestions to improve the course. However, Barbara concluded the interview by describing her experience as a new student attending college for the first time.

> I was scared for the first time being on campus. I didn't know anything. So, with taking the Guidance 10 class, it opened up my eyes. It opened up new gates. It was a new experience for me. It was exciting for me. It was something that I had not done in many years. It was just like me being a little child going into a new environment with much excitement - - carrying my backpack, having the schoolbooks. I mean at nighttime, I would get my clothes ready and lay them out. I'd lay them out and I would always wake up so early in the morning time, getting

> dressed so I could get to school. And...I met beautiful people. All my teachers were really great. Since I've been here, I haven't had any type of conflict or negativity or anything.

In addition, she mentioned that after the course she felt confident because she learned a tremendous amount of information in six weeks. Barbara commented that all the guidance courses helped her. "All the guidance classes that I've taken...opened up my eyes to go further."

Mario

Mario attended Coral College for five semesters from the fall of 1997 through the fall of 1999. He only took nine units each semester because he was employed as a construction worker at the time. When he was in a drug rehabilitation program, he was encouraged to enroll at Coral College by his counselor, who had gone through a certificate program at the college. Mario graduated with his certificate in Human Services Worker with a concentration in substance abuse.

Mario indicated that he enrolled in college to become a substance abuse counselor. He explained,

> I was thirty-seven, I think, at the time. My past wasn't all that great, so I got myself back on track and it took a lot of years. And I ended up deciding to become a counselor in drug and alcohol.

During his first semester in the fall of 1997, Mario enrolled in Guidance 10. He did not receive any other type of orientation prior to the course. For Mario, the most useful part of the course was meeting with a counselor and developing an Student Education Plan. Mario described his first meeting with a counselor,

> Well, I know one thing when I got into college; I was just as lost as everybody else. The instructor did sit me down in her office and I guess she wanted to kind of help me set up classes or transfer classes for a BA. But, at that time I wasn't really interested in the BA. My goal was to get my certificate, and that was it. So, she kind of gave me a little guidance and informed me of the right direction. And she told me, 'We're here anytime if you change your mind and you want to transfer; this is what you need to do. And you can come see me or one of the other counselors.' I've kind of utilized some of the other counselors, but not a whole lot like I should have. She did get me on my feet, told me what the required courses I needed to take for human services certificate, so I kind of went from there. And after she gave me this printout of all the classes I needed...after I had that little sheet, it helped me a lot.

Mario reported that the guidance courses were very useful for him. He took guidance courses throughout his college career due to his need for units to qualify for financial aid. Mario emphasized that everything in the class was useful. He indicated that he appreciated the instructor's patience with him as well as the other students.

Mario obtained a tremendous amount of useful information on certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements. He indicated that prior to the course he did not know what a prerequisite was.

> I was just going for my two certificates. It would probably take me one, two semesters to get my required [sic] course for an associate's degree. But, at the same time, I'm still a little confused as far as being transferred to another place.

Mario indicated that financial aid and veterans' services were very helpful while he

attended Coral College. Financial aid played a major role in helping Mario complete his college education. He needed financial aid to pay for his rent and other college expenses. Furthermore, Mario received additional money for being a veteran.

The career decision making section of the course did not affect his decision to stay enrolled in college but he pointed out that he knew he could change his major at any time and that was reassuring. He realized what was available regarding various majors and careers. Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan did not affect his decision to stay enrolled; nevertheless, they provided him with direction. The study skills section of the course did not influence his decision to stay in college; however, he mentioned that learning time management was important to him. He provided an example,

> That class kind of gave me an idea of how to schedule a weekly plan. And I also learned that...you might plan to do five things that day but plans are always subject to change at any given time. And things pop up that might change those plans for the remainder of the day. Just be lucky that you got two of those things done that day that you had planned to do. And so that dropped my stress level a little bit knowing that.

Due to Guidance 10, Mario learned to participate in class and become involved in class discussions therefore he was influenced to stay in college. Mario illustrated,

> All the guidance classes basically gave me a way to practice participation in class. I knew that I was going to make it out there in society. There's a saying in recovery…that says participate in life. In the past I haven't been doing that. I'd just sit in the back of the class and kind of be one of those people that blend in the

> class...by going to these guidance classes and knowing that it wasn't really a very big factor for me that's really going to influence my grades in the long run because I could always drop this class if I wasn't going to do too well. But it gave me the extra push to raise my hand and show the younger students that...this is what teaching and learning is all about. Because what you put in is what you should get out. And if you don't put in anything, you're not going to get anything out of it. So this class did encourage me to push a little bit harder and it helped me in my other classes at the same time.

Although Mario had a grade point average of a 4.0, he did not believe that his grade point average was influenced by the course.

Motivation from other students in the class kept him going and affected his decision to stay enrolled in college. Mario reported that other guys in the class were pursuing the same goals that he was; therefore, they encouraged each other to continue in their classes and helped each other. He said, "When they needed help, I'd help them, and when I needed help, they'd help me." Furthermore, he explained that his friends on campus and the campus environment were the personal or social factors that made him want to stay in college.

Mario met other students on his own not from the course; however, he mentioned that the instructor did make the students introduce themselves, tell where they were from and indicate what their goals were. He explained that everybody in the class had a fear of speaking in front of the class. Nevertheless, he mentioned that when he spoke in front of the class, he felt comfortable and more confident. Mario explained how his confidence in college increased by taking Guidance 10, thus he felt more confident in his other classes.

During the interview, he shared a story of when he scored a 100% on his first psychology test. He was the only one in the class that earned a perfect score. Mario explained how other students in the class wanted to study with him and that made a big impact on him; he felt good about himself. Furthermore, he illustrated,

> So they knew I wasn't as dumb as I looked. I was happy to help them out, too. So I think by doing and learning that I wasn't as dumb as I thought - - because some of us go through that where we go through a period of life where we stop growing in life emotionally, physically, spiritually - - and, by doing that, I think that really gave me the big boost that I needed to pursue the rest of the psychology classes.

Mario liked Guidance 10 and explained,

> I think it was knowing that I could go in this class and not be judged for who I used to be before by the teacher or by the students - - because I think we're all in the same boat whether they like it or not. We're all trying to get something out of this class. And there was a certain level of...influence from the teacher that gave us that little extra push. Knowing that we had somewhere to go to, especially the first semester. I needed someone to ask certain questions and get the right answer from.

Mario was unable to recall anything he did not like about the course, but continued describing other aspects of the course that he liked.

> Actually I remember [instructor's name] course was enjoyable. She was very nice, friendly. She always had time to say "Hi." She was like that the whole time and I think that was nice about being in her class and knowing that she was real no matter where she was. I know I got something out of this class. And it wasn't

always for the extra units anymore. It was for myself. Like the career guidance class that was very helpful too. It was like a feather in your cap. You learn all these little things that were helpful to you and I could pass them onto somebody else that's now in my field.

Although the course was not required, Mario registered for the course because his drug rehabilitation counselor recommended it. When asked what he would suggest to improve the course, he recommended that students learn the locations of all the student services' offices.

Mario's guidance class began with forty students and ended with thirty students. When asked if the course should be mandatory, he responded that it should not be mandatory. According to Mario, students should not be forced to learn something if they are not interested in learning. He reiterated, "I don't believe in pushing a person into something that they're not going to get anything out of. I think the way it is now is probably more beneficial to people." He concluded, "Yeah, having a smaller class would be better but not...making it mandatory for all these other people that don't want to take it. They're going to fail anyway. Why should they even be in there?"

Finally, when asked if he wanted to add anything about his experience in the course, Mario shared that he was grateful for Guidance 10 and the other guidance classes because he learned about several services on campus. Furthermore, he commented, "If you put in something, you're going get something good out of it. And I knew that if I put in 100%, I was going to get an 'A' and it wasn't a hard 'A' for me."

Mario concluded the interview by describing how he felt as a new student and after he took the guidance course.

> I was very uncomfortable when I first started college because of the age difference. Well, almost a sense of being overwhelmed by so many younger generations of students. It wasn't that long, maybe a month, two months for me to get over that feeling of being overwhelmed. I started fitting in...started participating more and putting forth the effort to meet people and introduce myself. Even if it's a couple minute conversation or you don't get any conversation, you're putting forth effort, energy. You're directing your energy in the right direction, whether you get a good response or a negative response. But that's what kind of encouraged me to do that a little more. I started to get into a more comfort zone. It made me feel like I'm part of this now.

Julia

Julia started attending Coral College during the summer of 1996 and dropped all of her classes the fall of 1997, which was her last semester. She took Guidance 10 the fall semester of 1996 and received credit for the class. Julia decided to enroll in college, "To see what's out there. I'm...taking a few classes here and there." Julia has many interests and scattered career goals. Julia commented,

> I need a structured kind of program. I really liked English a lot. I think my fear in continuing school is probably math, because my math is so bad. But I know I can overcome that. I know I can do it, but I just have crippled myself, but other than that, I think college is fantastic.

She had not received any other type of orientation prior to this class.

Julia reported that she took a break from college to travel and work abroad. When she returned to her hometown, she enrolled in a local university and is currently working

on her Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science. She may pursue the teaching field.

Julia stated that the information on financial aid, guidance and the volunteer program was the most useful information she learned in the class. When asked if she learned anything in the class that was not useful, she indicated that everything in the course was useful. The information on certificate, associate degrees and transfer requirements did not affect her decision to stay or drop out of college. Julia commented on why she dropped out of college, "Well obviously it didn't affect me because I didn't stay. For the longest time, I was just one of those wanderers. If something interests me then I'll go and I'll stay and then make a decision."

Julia reiterated that she was not ready to make a decision on a career or receive help from student services; therefore, information on student services or career decision-making did not affect her decision to stay or leave college. Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan did not affect her decision to stay or leave college; however, Julia stated that meeting with a counselor was great. Julia mentioned that her counselor was a very lovely lady and really nice. She emphasized the importance of a good guidance counselor.

Although the study skills section of the class did not affect Julia's decision to stay enrolled in college, she mentioned that the information was informative. The course did not influence her decision to leave college. Julia pointed out,

> I think if I was ready to stay in college, I would have followed up and said, "I've heard about this or that; can you help me with that?" But I think because I wasn't completely there. Well, I just love learning outside. I love to read my own books. I love to read, so I do that and I educate myself.

Her counselor recommended Guidance 10 therefore she enrolled in the course.

When asked about the size of her class and how that influenced her learning, she indicated that her class was about 20 students and she felt that was too big. To improve the course, Julia suggested that the instructor administer career interest inventory tests, which would help students learn about themselves and careers that would match their personalities. According to Julia, the course should not be mandatory; however, she did not state a reason why the course should not be mandatory.

During the concluding questions, Julia reported that by taking Guidance 10 she realized that she was not ready to be in college; she was not ready to make a commitment. When asked how to retain students in college she suggested, "I guess make more presentations…to the students. I mean something big where the students can see there's a guidance counselor…that you guys are here."

Julia commented that she appreciated the speakers who came to speak to her Guidance 10 course and gave information on their different programs. Furthermore, she suggested that information on learning disabilities should be discussed in this course.

> With this class also to get a hold of people if they had like a learning disability. That's a big thing. Most people say, "Man, you know, I just wasn't ever good in school." And I mean so many people don't do their potential because of one little handicap that they have. Yeah, somebody might actually have learning disabilities but that's okay. There are programs that can help them over time and they don't have to feel embarrassed about it. I think that would be good to help them.

Ron

Ron was a first generation college student who had been attending Coral College for five semesters since the fall semester of 1999. He enrolled in college because his mother told him to either go to school or get a job; as a result, he chose school. Ron was somewhat unsure about his academic goals but stated that he will major in art and possibly transfer to a nearby university. He attended Coral College part time this semester but generally he was a full time student. Ron worked part time at a local arts and crafts store.

Ron took Guidance 10 his first semester at Coral College, which was the fall of 1999. He did not have any other type of orientation before the course. According to Ron, the most useful part of the course was learning which student services are available and where the offices are located on campus. Furthermore, he indicated that he learned how to enroll in classes, write college level papers, and make presentations. Ron indicated that everything in the course was useful.

When asked how learning about certificates, degree and transfer requirements affected his decision to stay in college, he replied, "Actually it did because after I learned about that, I knew which classes I needed and I just go down the list each semester. Just keep goals for myself. I have a goal to get my associate's degree and go beyond that." Before the class he only planned to obtain his associate's degree. However, after he took the course, he realized the numerous career opportunities for art majors with a four-year degree as a result he decided to transfer to a nearby university.

The information on financial aid and student services affected his decision to stay enrolled in college because he learned that he could obtain financial assistance and that

helped him to stay in school. He reported that the survival skills section of the course did not affect his decision to stay enrolled. The information on career decision-making provided him with information on career opportunities for art majors thus he decided to stay enrolled in college.

Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan assisted him with identifying career goals and his priorities, which ultimately affected his decision to stay enrolled in college. Furthermore, he indicated that he found out which classes he needed for his major. When asked what it was about Guidance 10 that did or did not influence his decision to stay enrolled in college, he said nothing specifically although the course helped him. Although Ron could not identify anything specifically about the course that did or did not influence his decision to stay enrolled, he commented that the course did help him by giving him information about careers and student services.

The personal or school related factor that affected Ron's decision to stay in college was that he did not want to work in the fast food industry for the rest of his life. He said, "I want to make something out of my life, actually get somewhere." According to Ron, the course did make him feel a part of the campus social system. Guidance 10 encouraged him to be more social and talk to other students on campus. In the course, he remembered that everyone in the class introduced himself or herself, knew each other and felt comfortable in the class together.

Before Ron arrived at Coral College, he explained that he felt a little scared and intimidated. He remarked, "It was a little overwhelming. I didn't know what to expect but the class helped me a lot." After Ron completed the course, he replied that he was no longer scared and wanted to take as many classes as he could. According to Ron, the

course gave him confidence to talk to his teachers. He mentioned, "After I had this class, like every professor that I take a class with, I always connect with them in some kind of way."

When asked why he took the course, Ron pointed out, "Well the reason I took this class in the first place is because I needed an extra unit to get 12, so I kind of had to take it in a way. Once I took this class, I was glad I did. I didn't feel like it was a waste of time at all." Ron did not dislike anything about the course. Ron liked that the course was only five weeks and met once a week. He indicated that he liked the course small and intimate. He said, "You [the teacher] get a chance to relate with the students more instead of just standing up there teaching. Because you [the teacher] get a chance to help people individually."

Ron stated that he did not think the course should be mandatory but it should be recommended. He concluded,

> I think everything was really beneficial. And if students take guidance classes, they get to know where different departments are in the school and how to get everything they need. It was very helpful. I learned a lot and I definitely recommend it to other students.

Vanessa

Vanessa had been attending Coral College since the fall of 1999. She enrolled in college when she was laid off from her job. Vanessa's academic and career goal was to become a pre-school teacher. She attended college full time and worked part time. She took Guidance 10 during the fall semester of 1999. She did not have any other type of orientation previous to the course.

From what Vanessa remembered in the course, she found learning about local universities useful information since she plans to attend a university in the future. She commented that everything in the class was useful. According to Vanessa, learning about certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements affected her decision to stay enrolled in college because she had a goal to obtain her associate's degree then transfer to another college to earn her Bachelor's Degree. The student services and financial aid information did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college.

When Vanessa was in high school, she knew that she wanted to be a pre-school teacher; consequently, the career decision making section of the course did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college. Meeting with a counselor did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college; however, she replied that the counselors were very supportive and caring. The study skills section of the course did not influence Vanessa to stay enrolled in college. Guidance 10 did not influence her to stay enrolled in college. Vanessa mentioned that her grade point average had increased since taking the course but did not correlate the increase in her grade point average to the course.

Vanessa stated the following personal factors that affected her decision to stay enrolled in college.

> I push myself. I was abused when I was growing up and my parents said because of my learning disability I would never amount to anything. So I'm doing this to prove to them and to show them that I can do anything I want.

Vanessa shared that the course did make her feel a part of the campus social system. Also, she mentioned that one of the speakers from a local university spoke to her class about the numerous opportunities available,

> He said that I could get my Master's Degree. And I said, "You don't know how old I'll be when I get my Master's." And he said, "Well, it's better to be 48 and have your Master's than to be 48 and have nothing." And it started making me think.

In the interview, she expressed that the speaker in her class inspired her to pursue long-term academic goals.

Vanessa liked the course because the instructor encouraged the students to attend College Night, in which college representatives from hundreds of universities are available on campus to answer questions regarding their particular colleges. Vanessa's counselor recommended the course so she took the course. Vanessa stated that the number of students enrolled in the course did not make a difference to her.

Her suggestion to improve the course was to inform students about grant money, scholarships and financial aid. Vanessa pointed out, "They [students] don't realize that there's money out there. And nobody knows about it." Furthermore, she mentioned that services for learning disabled students should be discussed and emphasized in the course. When asked if the course should be mandatory, Vanessa responded, "Yeah, it should be mandatory for new students because it gives them the information that they need that they wouldn't have." Throughout the interview, Vanessa reiterated that she enjoyed the course and felt she learned important information that was useful.

Amy

Amy had only attended Coral College for two semesters; she was currently enrolled and took courses during the fall semester of 1999. She enrolled in college to obtain a degree in order to qualify for better jobs and have more opportunities. Amy's

academic and career goal was to become a registered nurse. She attended college part time and worked full time at a floral shop as a bookkeeper. Amy took Guidance 10 during her first semester, which was the fall semester of 1999. She did not attend any other type of orientation program previous to the course.

Amy explained that the course was useful when the teacher discussed associate degrees and transfer programs. She emphasized why this information was useful to her, "Because eventually I want to transfer and so she helped me [sic]...which classes were transferable and which ones you can't [transfer]." Amy responded that although some information in the course was not particularly useful to her, it was useful to other students in the class.

When asked how the financial aid and student services information affected her decision to stay enrolled in college, she indicated that it did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college since her mom paid for her college expenses. However, Amy mentioned that she would know where to go if she needed financial aid or student services and she believed these programs would benefit her. The career decision-making section of the class did affect her decision to stay enrolled in college. Amy reported, "Well I've always been kind of interested in nursing and when I took the class, I remember we went and did the career search and...it made me realize that's what I really wanted to do." The career decision making section of the course confirmed Amy's original career goal, which was to become a nurse.

Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan affected Amy's decision to stay enrolled in college. She stated,

That helped a lot, because he told me what I needed to do and what classes I

needed to take and without that I would be just trying to do it on my own and I had no idea where to start.

Although the study skills section of the course did not affect Amy's decision to stay enrolled in college, she mentioned that the information was somewhat helpful.

Amy took the course because she thought it would be a fun class to take. When asked what it was about the course that made her want to stay enrolled in college, she explained, "Just how the instructor was always talking about the money, like how much money you can make doing certain careers." The instructor discussed the salaries of several careers and emphasized how students make more money with a college degree. This information encouraged Amy to stay enrolled in college. According to Amy, there was nothing about the course that influenced her grade point average.

Personal or social factors that affected Amy's decision to stay enrolled in college were that she wanted a better life for herself. Furthermore, she explained that with nursing there is always a job wherever you go and this career has a high job demand. The course did not make her feel a part of the campus social system. Amy remarked that she liked the course because she learned about different opportunities and jobs. When asked what she did not like about the course, she answered that students in the class did not take the class seriously and were disrespectful and rude to the instructor by talking during class time.

Amy's course was five weeks and she liked that it was a short-term class. Since she did not know which classes to take for her major, she took Guidance 10, even though it was not required. Her guidance course had 25 students, which she preferred because she stated that the course was more focused.

Amy did not have any suggestions to improve the course but she mentioned that she does recommend the course to other students. According to Amy, the course should not be mandatory because, if students want the information, they need to go out and get it. Amy concluded the interview by remarking that her teacher was really nice and she liked her.

Tanisha

Tanisha attended Coral College for two semesters and was not currently enrolled at the time of the interview. She decided to enroll in college because at the time she was staying home and wanted something else to do. Tanisha's career goal was to become an elementary school teacher. She had to drop out of college because of financial reasons. Tanisha stated that she planned to return to Coral College when she has the financial resources to assist her with college expenses. When she attended Coral College, she took full time classes and did not work. She took Guidance 10 during her first semester in the fall of 1999. She did not have any other type of orientation previously.

For Tanisha, the most useful section of the course was learning how to obtain assistance from the Educational Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS), which pays for students' books, and provides counseling as well as other services. Furthermore, she mentioned, "They helped me with...if I want to transfer to another college. And then they helped me...do my schedule of classes." Finally, she reported that everything she learned in the class was useful.

Tanisha did not know that she could transfer to a university consequently learning about certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements influenced her to stay enrolled in college. Moreover, Tanisha learned that there was a local public university,

which influenced her to continue her education. When asked how learning about student services and financial aid was helpful, Tanisha reiterated that the EOPS program was extremely helpful since they paid for her books.

When asked how the information on career decision-making helped her, she explained,

> That helped me because...my major was psychology. And I really didn't know how long it was going to take. I didn't know what... I had to put into it until the decision making came in to play. That's when I decided to be a teacher because it was really a lot...of time to be a psychologist so I said, "Well being a teacher is the next best thing to help children."

Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan helped Tanisha since she did not know how to choose her classes. When she met with her counselor, the counselor assisted her with her class schedule. The study skills and time management section of the course helped her realize she needed to make time to study and make school a priority. The course did not influence Tanisha to stay or withdraw from college. She reiterated that she had to drop out of college because of her financial situation. Tanisha's favorite part of the course was the instructor. She gave an example of why she liked her instructor.

> She...made everybody a part of the class. And we became a group. We grouped up and she made sure we all knew each other. The favorite part...was when we had to meet somebody in the class and write down their [sic] name and what they were going to school for, and then we switched papers and we got someone else's paper. I liked that. She introduced us to someone else on campus that we

wouldn't have met otherwise.

Finally, when Tanisha was asked what she disliked about the course, she shared that she enjoyed the whole course.

Tanisha recalled that her course was either four or five weeks and she would have preferred the course was the whole semester since she enjoyed the class. One of her friends recommended Guidance 10 therefore she took the course. Her class had about thirty students and she preferred a bigger class in order to learn about different views from different people. Tanisha concluded that the course was very thorough and she believed that the course should be mandatory because, in her opinion, a student really benefits from a guidance class.

Jamie

Jamie had been attending Coral College for one year and took Guidance 10 during the fall semester of 1999, which was her first semester of college. After high school, she came to Coral College to find a career. Her academic and career goals were to obtain an associate's degree and transfer to a four-year university majoring in psychology. Jamie would like to be a family, marriage or substance abuse counselor. Jamie attended college full time and worked part time at a local sandwich shop. She did not attend any type of orientation prior to the course.

For Jamie, meeting with a counselor and setting up a Student Education Plan were the most beneficial aspects of the course. According to Jamie, everything in the course was useful. Learning about certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college; however, she pointed out that it did let her know what she had to do in order to transfer.

According to Jamie, financial aid paid for her college expenses so consequently the information on financial aid and student services affected her decision to stay in college. The career decision-making section of the course did not affect Jamie's decision to stay enrolled in college since she decided to become a counselor in high school when friends would ask her for advice. When asked how meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan affected her decision to stay enrolled in college, she answered, "It helped me plan out what I was going to take rather than spontaneously just picking something. It helped me set up what I needed to take next from what I've already taken."

Study skills and time management did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college; however, it helped her set up a schedule and study plan. When asked what it was about the course that influenced her decision to stay enrolled in college, she stated, "The fact that I learned that there's a lot more help than I was told when I first got here. As far as financial aid, counseling, and LD [learning disabilities]."

Jamie reported that the course did not influence her grade point average. She indicated that she has stayed in college to earn her degree and start her own psychology practice. She emphasized that she stayed in college based on her own self-motivation. In addition, she mentioned that being in school has given her self-confidence. When she took two semesters off from college, she was unhappy, thus her husband encouraged her to return to college.

According to Jamie, the course did make her feel more comfortable on campus and a part of the campus social system. She stated that she liked the course due to the easy course material. Jamie did not dislike anything about the course. Her course was

about four weeks long and she would have liked the course to be longer. Jamie suggested, "I think it would be better to have it in a longer period of time; that way you don't have to cram so much information into a few weeks." Jamie needed an extra unit thus she took Guidance 10. She mentioned that she had a small class but the class size did not make a difference to her.

When asked if the course should be mandatory, Jamie answered, "I think so because that way they [new students] get in and they learn about the college. They learn about counseling, financial aid and LD [learning disabilities]." Jamie concluded that the most beneficial part of the class was that she made a connection with a counselor and she feels comfortable going to the counseling department for help.

Valerie

Valerie was a first generation college student, who attended Coral College for three years, took a few semesters off and was currently enrolled at the time of the interview. She decided to enroll in college to educate herself and gain more knowledge in the business field. Her academic goal was to major in business and someday own a bed and breakfast inn. In the future, she planned to transfer to a university. Valerie attended college part time and worked full time at a fast food restaurant. Valerie took Guidance 10 during the fall semester of 1999. She did not have any other type of orientation prior to the course.

Valerie did not remember the class very well. When asked what she learned in the class that was useful, she reported, "Basically, what I do remember in the class is that he [the instructor] gave us a plan -- helped us learn how to plan out a schedule. He taught us how to use the school...the library and things like that. It was useful because I didn't

know anything." She indicated that everything she learned was useful.

Valerie missed a lot of classes, so she did not remember learning about certificates, associate degrees or transfer requirements. She vaguely remembered her teacher discussing financial aid and student services; nevertheless, she confirmed that this did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college. Valerie did recall the career decision-making section of the class. She recalled the instructor going over various salaries for particular careers and how much more a person would make with a college degree. She found this information interesting; however, it did not influence her decision to stay enrolled in college.

Valerie did not meet with a counselor or develop a Student Education Plan; therefore, this did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college. At the time of the interview, she still had not met with a counselor. Valerie pointed out that the reason that she has not met with a counselor is because she does not have time due to her work schedule. Furthermore, she indicated that if she did meet with a counselor, she would go to the counselor who taught Guidance 10 because she made a connection with him. She is currently enrolled and mentioned that this is the first semester that she will have completed all of her classes.

Valerie did not remember the study skills section of the class thus it did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college. When asked what about Guidance 10 influenced her to stay in college, she replied, "Well, I think it is helpful for the people that...are just starting out. I didn't know the campus at that time. It would have been more helpful to myself if I actually paid attention." Valerie remarked that the course did not influence her grade point average.

According to Valerie, a personal or school related factor that affected her decision to stay enrolled in college was that she does not want to be working at a fast food restaurant the rest of her life. She commented, "I want to go to school to make something of myself. My parents they help me stay in school because otherwise I probably wouldn't come back. They help me financially. They support me. They try to encourage me to finish." The class did not make her feel a part of the campus social system.

Valerie liked the course because the instructor gave the students a Student Education Plan and she enjoyed the campus tour. Although she does not remember very much about student services, she mentioned that she would know how to access information out of the handbook, class schedule or catalog. When asked what she did not like about the course, she answered, "The teacher was kind of slow. He just dragged on and on. It was kind of boring. So that was why I probably wasn't so attentive in the class."

In regards to the class format, Valerie answered that she would prefer for the course to be one hour a week for the whole semester. Her sister recommended that she take the course, which is the reason she took Guidance 10. Her class had 15 students and she preferred it small and intimate. Valerie remarked that if the class was too big then it would have given her an uneasy feeling. Valerie's suggestion for the course was to have more group activities. Furthermore, she thought that the course was pretty good and could not think of any other suggestions.

Emma

Emma attended Coral College for one semester and was not enrolled at the time of the interview. Her academic and career goal was to become a nurse. She was not able to complete her academic goal due to personal obstacles in her life that caused her to drop out of college. She moved out of her house, started dating a new boyfriend, worked full time, and became pregnant. When she was attending Coral College, she took classes full time and worked part time. She completed Guidance 10 her first semester of college, which was the fall semester of 1999. She did not have any other type of orientation previous to the course.

Emma remembered the course and thought the campus tour and student services information was the most useful. She explained,

> Well I knew where the buildings were at, like where the financial aid, the bookstore and all that, little details that helped me a lot because I never actually had been on the campus. And then, I even helped my friend too because I kind of showed him. I told him to take the class. And he took it and said it helped him.

Everything she learned in the class was useful.

Emma commented that she was not at Coral College long enough to know if learning about certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements affected her decision to stay or withdraw from college. She reported that the information on student services and financial aid did not influence her decision to stay enrolled or withdraw from college. The career decision-making section of the course did not influence Emma's decision to stay enrolled or withdraw from college. According to Emma, meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan influenced her to stay in college.

However, at that time she had too many personal obstacles in her life, which is the reason she withdrew.

When asked what about Guidance 10 did or did not influence her to stay in college, she indicated,

> If things hadn't happened in my personal life, I know I'd still be at...college. I know that because I still wanted to continue my education. I still do. I mean the instructor helped me a lot. The instructor helped me gather a little information. The instructor showed me around the campus. The teachers were wonderful. The teachers were nice. I liked the teachers.

Emma is planning to return to college in the future when her baby is older.

While attending Coral College, Emma felt like a part of the campus social system. Furthermore, she mentioned that the students were friendly and, if she did not know something, her classmates were willing to help her. Emma reported that everything in the class was fun. She did not like that the class was a short-term class. She would have preferred to take Guidance 10 as a full semester class, as she would have liked to receive more information. She explained, "I would have liked it if it would have [sic] took like a full semester. They probably would have shown me a little bit more." Emma took the class because she did not know the campus and it was her first time at a college.

Emma's class had 10 to 15 students and she preferred the smaller class so that the instructor could spend a little more time with the students. She did not have any suggestions to improve the class. During the interview, she explained that it had been too long since she took the class consequently she could not think of any suggestions. There was no additional information that she would have wanted to receive in the class.

Emma remarked that the class should be mandatory since new students do not know the campus and the class gives them the chance to take a campus tour and learn where student services are located. Finally, Emma was asked if she would like to add anything regarding her experience in Guidance 10 and she concluded,

> It was a nice experience for me. It had been years, I hadn't been in school so I felt good about myself. I recommended it to my friend. After he graduated from high school, I went down there with him and showed him. I told him, 'You need to take this class...it's only one unit.' He ended up taking that one and he said it helped him out a lot.

Connie

Connie had been attending Coral College for five semesters. In 1986, she arrived in the United States from Vietnam. She decided to enroll in college to make more money and become a computer technician. In addition, English was her second language; consequently, she needed to take English classes. Connie attended college full time and worked part time. She took Guidance 10 her first semester of college, which was the fall semester of 1999. She did not have any other type of orientation previous to the orientation class.

When asked what she remembered learning in the class that was useful, she mentioned that the most useful part of the class was the introduction to college and student services. Due to English being her second language, she did not understand a lot of the course material. However, she mentioned that her instructor helped her understand which majors and programs match up with particular careers. According to Connie, everything in the course was useful.

Connie confirmed that learning about certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements did affect her decision to stay enrolled in college. In addition, she responded that learning about student services and financial aid also influenced her decision to stay enrolled in college. During the interview, Connie struggled with commenting further on the questions she was asked. Finally, she answered that the career decision-making section of the course affected her decision to stay enrolled in college. She commented,

> Yeah, because at that time I didn't know which one [major] I [sic] choose. Then after I take some classes for English and then I know which one [major] I choose...because I know about computers. I have a computer at home. I know how to use computers.

Connie did not remember learning about study skills; therefore, that did not influence her decision to stay enrolled in college. Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan did influence her to stay in college. She explained, "She [the counselor] help [sic] me choose the class...and she explain to me everything if I don't understand."

Connie remarked that Guidance 10 influenced her to stay in college. She indicated that the counselors were very supportive and helpful to new students who are not familiar with the college. A personal and social reason that influenced her to stay enrolled in college was to learn better English. She reiterated, "Every time I go everywhere I feel embarrassed and that's why I decide to start this (college)." Connie wants to stay in college to improve her English skills.

The course made Connie feel more comfortable on campus. Her favorite part of

the course was the financial aid information. Connie did not dislike anything about the course. She explained that she preferred the course to be a short-term course. In order to be awarded full financial aid, a student must be enrolled in 12 units. Connie took the course to receive a unit towards the 12-unit requirement. There were approximately thirty students enrolled in her course and she reported that the class size did not affect her understanding of the course material.

Connie did not have any suggestions to improve the course. She reported that she did not think the course should be mandatory. She concluded,

> I think that class [sic] it help for me. And the instructor is good. She explain [sic] me everything. If I need help, I ask her because that time my English it not well. I tell her...I don't understand too much but she said that's okay and she will explain to me everything I don't understand.

Isabel

Isabel was a first generation college student who had been attending Coral College for five semesters. Prior to enrolling in college, Isabel had been working full time but quit her job when her work hours were decreased. Her academic goal was to finish an office skills certificate and in the future obtain an associate's degree. She wanted to complete her certificate in order to develop skills to qualify her for various office jobs. At the time of the interview, Isabel attended college part time and worked almost full time. She completed Guidance 10 her first semester of college, which was the fall semester of 1999. She did not have any other type of orientation prior to the course.

Isabel had a difficult time remembering the course. When asked what she remembered that was useful she responded, "I remember...the blue phones are for

emergencies. And I found out where the financial aid office is. Student services. The most basic stuff I needed to know. Useful in that I saw my way around the school." Isabel indicated that everything in the course was useful.

Learning about certificates, associate degrees or transfer requirements did not affect her decision to stay enrolled in college. She reported that the student services and financial aid information affected her decision to stay enrolled in college and helped her tremendously. The information on career decision-making did not affect her decision to stay in college because she is presently confused about which career she should choose.

Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan helped Isabel become aware of the diverse opportunities available to her at Coral College. She has not met with a counselor recently due to her limited time with working and attending classes. She remarked that learning study skills did affect her decision to stay enrolled in college.

Isabel continues to be enrolled in college because of her mother's support. She illustrated,

> My mom told me to stay. My neighbor, she told me, 'I know it's going to be hard and keep going' and I don't like to give up. It's been hard but I've been through it. It's important to me and it's important to most of my family.

The course did not influence her grade point average. The course did make her feel a part of the campus social system and she expressed that it made her feel more welcomed on campus. Isabel's favorite part of the course was gathering information from the various student services' offices. She pointed out, "The teacher knew about it [student services] but wanted us to know about it, too. Go to the financial aid office, get information there or go somewhere else and get information from there too." There was nothing she

disliked about the course.

Isabel's course was approximately six weeks and she preferred the short-term course format. When asked why she took Guidance 10, she explained that she wanted to know more information about the campus. Isabel's course had approximately fifteen students and she preferred the smaller class. She indicated that she does better in smaller classes. Isabel explained, "Because if it's a lot of people, the instructor doesn't give much attention to you."

Isabel concluded the interview by suggesting that the course include information regarding learning disabilities. She mentioned that the course should be mandatory because it would expose new students to opportunities and services available.

Summary of the Interviews

From the surveys, questions were developed and framed for the interviews with the respondents. Twelve students, who completed Guidance 10 and who returned a survey, were interviewed to investigate in greater depth how the course did or did not influence them to stay in college. To guarantee anonymity, the researcher assigned fictitious names to each of the respondents. Interviews were conducted in the researcher's office. The interviews covered the following topics: (a) personal data; (b) elements of a successful orientation class; (c) the influence of Guidance 10 on retention; (d) the influence of Guidance 10 on grade point average; (e) variables beyond orientation that influence retention; (f) characteristics of an orientation course at a two-year college; and (g) suggestions to improve Guidance 10.

Personal data

Two males and 10 females were interviewed. Eight of the students interviewed were currently enrolled whereas three of them withdrew and one of them graduated with his certificate. Five of the respondents attended college part time while three of them were full time and four of them were not enrolled. Nine of the respondents interviewed took Guidance 10 during the fall of 1999. Two students took the course the fall of 1996 and one student took the course the fall of 1997. None of the students interviewed had any other type of orientation prior to the Guidance 10 course.

Elements of a successful orientation class

Students were asked what the most useful part of the course was and they answered by discussing different aspects of the course. The majority of the respondents described meeting with a counselor, creating a Student Education Plan, and the student services information as the most useful parts of the course. Furthermore, these respondents explained the importance of creating a Student Education Plan with a counselor and having a list of required courses needed to complete their respective programs.

A few respondents indicated that the financial aid information and campus tour were the most beneficial sections of the course. The financial aid information was essential for some of the respondents since they needed financial aid to continue their education. Finally, a few of the respondents mentioned that the information on career decision making as well as associate degrees and transferring to a university were the most useful aspects of the course. In summary, meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan appeared to be the most useful part of the course for the

respondents interviewed. When respondents were asked if there was something in the course that was not useful, 100% of the respondents indicated that everything in the course was useful.

Next, respondents were asked if learning about certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements influenced their decision to stay enrolled or withdraw from college. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that learning about certificates, associate degrees and transfer requirements influenced their decision to stay enrolled in college. Forty-two percent of the respondents interviewed replied that learning about these requirements did not affect their decision to stay enrolled. One respondent, who was not influenced by this information, commented that she missed a lot of classes; therefore, she did not remember learning about requirements for certificates, associate degrees or transfer programs.

Eight out of the 12 respondents learned what was required to obtain a certificate, an associate's degree and transfer to a university, which influenced them to stay in college. Two of these respondents were encouraged to stay in college as a result of a speaker in Guidance 10, who informed them about a local university where they could earn their Bachelor's Degree.

When the students were asked if learning about financial aid and student services influenced their decision to stay enrolled in college, seven respondents answered in the affirmative and five respondents responded in the negative. Five of the seven respondents, who answered in the affirmative, reported that this information did influence them to stay enrolled in college, received financial aid. These respondents all commented that they needed financial aid to assist them with college expenses and would

not have been able to go to college without this assistance. One of the students, who responded in the negative and did not believe the information influenced her to stay enrolled, reported that she vaguely remembered her instructor discussing this information.

When respondents were asked if the career decision-making section of the course influenced them to stay enrolled in college, six of the students responded in the affirmative and six of them answered in the negative. One of the respondents, who indicated that the information did not influence her to stay enrolled in college, mentioned that she already had a career goal prior to the course.

One of the respondents, who remarked that the information did influence her to stay enrolled in college, commented that this information confirmed her career goal to become a nurse. A female respondent, who indicated that the information affected her decision to stay enrolled, pointed out that she changed her career goal when her counselor informed her of the numerous requirements for that particular career. Finally, a male respondent, who reported that the career information was helpful, mentioned that he found out about possible careers related to art majors, which was very beneficial for him.

Meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan influenced 75% of the respondents to stay enrolled in college. Twenty-five percent of the respondents were not influenced to stay enrolled in college by this section of the course. One of the respondents, who pointed out that this did not affect her decision to stay enrolled, indicated that it did not affect her decision due to the fact that she did not meet with a counselor or create a Student Education Plan. Two students, who reported that this information influenced them to stay enrolled in college, remarked that it helped them

because they knew which classes to take for their academic programs and they did not have to chose classes on their own. Furthermore, they emphasized that the Student Education Plan kept them on track.

Another female respondent stated that the Student Education Plan was helpful because then she took the appropriate classes to reach her academic goal. Finally, a female respondent explained that by meeting with a counselor she felt that more opportunities were open to her such as receiving an associate's degree and being able to transfer to a university.

Learning survival skills such as time management and study skills influenced four respondents to stay enrolled in college and did not influence eight of the respondents interviewed. One of the eight respondents, who emphasized that this information did not influence her decision to stay enrolled in college, mentioned that she did not remember this part of the course. A female respondent pointed out that this section of the course influenced her to stay in college because it made her more focused on her studies. Another female respondent replied that the study skills part of the course was excellent. Finally, a male respondent commented that the survival skills section of the course helped him to set up a weekly schedule and study plan, which kept him on track.

The influence of Guidance 10 on retention

When students were asked to describe how Guidance 10 influenced them to stay or withdraw from college, 7 out of 12 of the respondents explained how the course influenced them to persist while 5 out of 12 of the respondents remarked how the course did not influence them. Three respondents indicated that nothing about the course influenced them to stay in college. One female respondent reported that she dropped out

of college due to financial reasons, thus it had nothing to do with the course. Another female respondent replied that after she took the course she realized that she was not ready to make a commitment to college; consequently, she dropped out. Therefore, five respondents were not influenced by Guidance 10 to stay enrolled.

Seven respondents were influenced by the course to continue their enrollment in college. Two respondents mentioned that the assistance they received from the counselors or instructors of the class as the reason they stayed enrolled in college. Two other respondents remarked that the campus tour and learning where everything was influenced them to stay in college. One female respondent indicated that learning to manage her time and staying focused influenced her decision. Furthermore, a male student described how participating in Guidance 10 helped him to become more comfortable and confident in all of his classes, which ultimately influenced him to stay in college. Finally, a student answered that in Guidance 10, she learned about the potential earnings she could obtain with a college degree and that motivated her to stay in college.

The influence of Guidance 10 on grade point average

When the students were asked if the Guidance 10 class influenced their grade point average, the majority of the respondents answered that the course did not influence their grade point average. Nevertheless, one respondent mentioned that the class kept her motivated, which she believed affected her grade point average.

Variables beyond orientation that influence retention

There were numerous personal and social factors that influenced students to stay enrolled or withdraw from college. First, three respondents had to drop out of college due to miscellaneous personal factors. One respondent had a baby, another respondent

did not have the finances to pay for her education and the last respondent was not ready to commit to college. Next, three respondents explained that they stayed in college to make a better life for themselves. Furthermore, these respondents were self-motivated to finish their academic goals and one of them pointed out that being in college gave her self-confidence to know that she could finish her degree.

Two of the respondents worked at fast food restaurants and they both agreed that they did not want to work at fast food restaurants for the rest of their lives. They both commented that they want to make something out of themselves. A male respondent mentioned that he stayed in college as a result of the motivation from the other students in the class, which encouraged him to complete his certificate. A female respondent indicated that she stayed in college to learn English better since English was her second language. She felt embarrassed when she spoke in front of people; therefore she stayed in college to learn English better.

A female respondent, who was a re-entry student, indicated that she had an on campus job through the work experience program. This on campus job motivated her to stay in college. In addition, she learned additional office skills in her classes that would help her with her office job. Finally, a female respondent was encouraged by her parents to continue her enrollment.

Fifty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that they felt like a part of the campus social system after taking Guidance 10. Forty-two percent of the respondents indicated that the course did not make them feel a part of the campus social system. One female respondent reported that she felt a part of the campus social system prior to taking the class since she already knew people on campus before she came to college. A male

respondent mentioned that he met students on his own; therefore, the course did not make him feel a part of the social system. A few of the students pointed out that the instructor of Guidance 10 made the students feel a part of the campus social system when she/he had the students introduce themselves to each other on the first day of class.

A female respondent commented that she felt more welcomed on campus after taking the course. Another female respondent answered that she felt more a part of the campus social system as a result of her friendly classmates in the course. Finally, an art major responded that he felt a part of the campus community by taking the class because he was encouraged to talk to other students and to get to know them; therefore, he became more social in his other classes.

Next, respondents were asked what they liked about Guidance 10. Five of the 12 respondents indicated that they liked all the new things they learned as well as learning about the different opportunities and services available on campus. A re-entry male student stated that he enjoyed the course because his teacher or classmates did not judge him. One male respondent remarked that in the class he felt comfortable approaching his Guidance 10 teacher, which increased his confidence to talk to his other instructors.

A female respondent answered that she liked the course due to the easy course material whereas another female liked that the instructor had the class introduce themselves to each other; therefore, the students knew someone else on campus. The Student Education Plan and campus tour were the reasons another student liked the course. Another female respondent mentioned that learning about financial aid was her favorite part of the course. Finally, one student answered that there was nothing in particular that she liked about the course because everything was fun.

The majority of the respondents (75%) interviewed indicated that there was nothing they disliked about the Guidance 10 course. Twenty-five percent of the respondents reported something that they disliked about the course. One student mentioned that she disliked some of the other students in the course; she mentioned students who were rude, did not take it seriously and talked during class. Another student reported that she disliked the course because the instructor was boring and slow. Finally, a woman explained that she disliked that the course was a short-term course; she would have preferred a full semester Guidance 10 course.

Characteristics of an orientation course at a two-year college

When respondents were asked how long their course was and if the length of the course affected them learning the course material, 58% of the respondents indicated that they preferred the short-term course format. Forty-two percent of the respondents pointed out that they would have preferred the course to be the entire semester. Three out of these five respondents, who would have preferred the course to be the entire semester, explained that they would have liked the course to be longer in order to learn more about the campus and also they would have liked the course material to not have to be crammed into a short period of time. The majority of the respondents commented that their course was 5-6 weeks.

Respondents were asked how many students were in their course and how that influenced their understanding of the course material. According to the respondents interviewed, the smaller classes had 10-20 students and the bigger classes had 25-40 students. The majority of the respondents (67%) answered that they preferred the smaller class size in order to learn the material better, the class was more intimate, the

instructor gave the students more attention and they felt more comfortable in the class. Two respondents indicated that the number of students in the course did not influence their understanding of the course material. Two respondents preferred the bigger class size in order to be exposed to different opinions, views and people.

Guidance 10 was not a mandatory course; therefore, students were asked why they took the course and if they believed it should be mandatory. Three of the respondents remarked that they took the course due to the recommendations of their counselors. Three other respondents indicated that they took the course to make their 12-unit requirement to be full time students. Three respondents mentioned that they took the course to learn more information about the campus and they thought it would be fun. Two other respondents replied that they took the course as a result of a friend's recommendation. Finally, a drug rehabilitation counselor recommended the course to one of the male respondents.

Seven of the respondents indicated that the course should not be mandatory while four of the respondents reported that the course should be mandatory. One respondent mentioned that she had no opinion as to whether the course should or should not be mandatory. One of the respondents, who reported that the course should not be mandatory, emphasized that people cannot be forced to learn something if they do not want to learn. In addition, a female respondent, who answered that the course should not be mandatory, indicated that if students want information about the college, they should obtain the information themselves.

Finally, two students, who reported that the course should not be mandatory, indicated that the course should be recommended but not required. The respondents who

agreed that the course should be mandatory explained that the course should be mandatory in order for students to receive information they need and to learn about services available.

Suggestions to improve Guidance 10

Twenty-five percent of the respondents interviewed offered suggestions to improve the course. A female respondent suggested that the learning disability (LD) program should be mentioned in the course and students should be encouraged to take the LD test. According to the student, she attended Coral College for one year before she found out that she had a learning disability; therefore, she missed out on taking advantage of the services. Another female respondent indicated that more group and individual activities should be included in the course to make it more fun. Finally, a female student suggested that additional presentations about student services should be incorporated into the class. The other nine respondents did not have any suggestions.

Respondents were asked if they wanted to add any additional information about their experience in Guidance 10. Fifty percent of the respondents offered additional comments regarding their experiences in Guidance 10. Two respondents mentioned that they recommended the course to a friend. Another respondent reiterated that she was not ready for college, which is the reason she could not commit at that time and chose to drop out. The most beneficial part of the course for another student was the connection she made with the counselor or instructor of the course; consequently, she felt comfortable going to the counseling office for help. A student who dropped out of college due to her pregnancy remarked that it was an enjoyable experience to be in college and she plans to

return. Finally, a female respondent pointed out that the learning disability services should be mentioned in the course.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This chapter summarizes the results of the study, discusses the implications, makes recommendations for educators and suggestions for additional research. Students who do not complete a college degree will have a difficult time competing in today's job market. An increasing number of jobs in the 21st Century require college degrees. A college degree opens doors and increases the number of opportunities for jobs. According to the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (2000), students who have a high school diploma will make $22,272 per year while students with a four-year university degree will start out at $43,630 per year. Over a lifetime of working thirty years, a person with a high school diploma will only earn $609,000 while a college graduate will earn $1,421,000. The impact a college education can have on a person's potential earnings is evident. The difficult task at the community college level is retaining new students until they graduate with an associate's degree or transfer to a four-year university.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. This study was designed to obtain quantitative as well as qualitative data. In part one, a survey was distributed to students who attended Coral College from the fall of 1996 through the fall of 1999, completed Guidance 10 and scored no higher than a

level one and level two on 2 out of 3 of the assessment tests. Survey data were used to frame interview questions for the qualitative part of the study. In part two, 12 students, who completed Guidance 10 and returned a survey, were interviewed to investigate in greater depth how the course did or did not influence them to stay enrolled in college. Interviews were used to give students the opportunity to share their stories and how their experiences in Guidance 10 influenced them.

Summary

This study answered the following research questions: (a) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance of new community college students; (b) What are the influences of a freshman orientation course on the retention of new community college students; and (c) What is the relationship between the objectives of the course and student outcomes such as GPA and retention?

The results from the interviews indicated that a freshman orientation course did not influence the students' academic performance. When the students were asked if the Guidance 10 class influenced their grade point average, the majority of the respondents answered in the negative. Nevertheless, one respondent mentioned that the class kept her motivated, which she believed affected her grade point average.

Fralisck (1993) concluded that students, who complete an orientation course, are less likely to leave the college and have a higher grade point average (GPA) than those who do not take an orientation course. The findings of this study are in line with Fralisck's research since the majority of the respondents, who completed the course, did not leave the college and had a higher GPA, than those students who did not take an orientation course. The majority of the respondents concurred with Fidler and Hunter

(1989) that academic achievement, which was measured by cumulative grade point average, did not change significantly as a result of the course. Respondents were asked if the course influenced their GPA and the majority of them answered in the negative.

The data from the interviews illustrated that a freshman orientation course can influence the retention of new community college students. When students were asked to describe what it was about Guidance 10 that influenced them to stay or withdraw from college, 7 out of 12 of the respondents explained how the course influenced them to persist while 5 out of 12 of the respondents remarked how the course did not influence them. Three respondents indicated that nothing about the course influenced them to stay in college. One respondent mentioned that he/she dropped out of college due to financial reasons while the other respondent dropped out because she was not ready to make a commitment to college. Seven respondents were influenced by different aspects of the course to continue their enrollment in college.

Data from the interviews suggested that there is not a relationship between the course objectives and the respondents' grade point averages. However, the data from the interviews indicated that there is a relationship between the course objectives and retention. Respondents identified particular aspects of the orientation course that influenced them to stay enrolled in college. Seven out of 12 of the respondents explained how the course influenced them to persist. Meeting with a counselor, going on a campus tour, learning time management, learning to speak in front of others, and learning about the potential earnings of a college graduate were aspects of the course that influenced students to persist in college.

The most interesting result of this study was that although the majority of the

respondents interviewed agreed that the orientation course benefited them in some way, the majority of them did not believe that the course should be mandatory. The respondents believed that if new students want information about the college they need to go out and find it. Furthermore, respondents mentioned that students should not be forced to learn something they do not want to learn. Finally, if the course was mandatory it would change the dynamics of the course because there would be students in the course who did not want to take the course and there would be larger class sections. Therefore, the classes would lose the small, intimate feeling that the respondents liked about the course.

Another interesting result of the study was that 3 out of 12 of the respondents interviewed indicated that learning disability services should be emphasized in the course. These three students found out later in their college careers that they had learning disabilities; therefore, as new students they were not receiving services. These students suggested that new students should be aware of learning disability services when they begin their college careers in order to obtain the appropriate services.

Finally, the connection students made with their counselor or instructor of the course was mentioned several times in various aspects of the interviews. Students appreciated the support they received from their counselors as well as the friendly demeanor and attitude. In the surveys along with the interviews, respondents reported that meeting with a counselor was the most beneficial aspect of the course

Discussion

On the basis of this study, it was evident that students felt Guidance 10 was helpful, beneficial and useful. Previous studies of effective orientation programs have

concluded that freshman orientation courses do have a positive influence on retention (Gardner, 1986, and Fidler & Hunter, 1989). The results of this study suggest that meeting with a counselor and learning about student services and financial aid influences students to stay enrolled in college. The findings of this study support the current research on orientation that claims an orientation course helps to retain students.

Elements of a successful orientation class

Research by Gass (1990) and Gardner (1986) suggested that a successful seminar course should include: (a) an introduction to higher education, (b) continue orientation, (c) teach academic survival skills, (d) provide a support group, (e) an opportunity for students to make friends, (f) provide a mentor, (g) improve students' attitudes towards faculty, (h) provide career counseling, (I) make freshman feel significant, (j) generate enthusiasm for the institution and (k) make students informed about opportunities and requirements at the university. The guidance course in this study was consistent with the course described by Gass and Gardner since Guidance 10 integrated the above topics into the course. The orientation courses described in the literature (Perigo & Upcraft, 1989, Gordon & Grites, 1984) were similar to the orientation course, Guidance 10, offered at Coral College.

The research in this study confirmed that a support group was imperative in order for new students to persist. The findings in this study concurred with Blum and Spangehl's (1982) research, which suggested that all college students, particularly high-risk students, need a support system to help them to succeed in college. The respondents in the study indicated several support groups such as: their classmates, families and counselors that influenced them to persist in college. First, a few of the respondents

interviewed mentioned that the support they received in Guidance 10 from other students influenced them to stay enrolled. Next, a respondent remarked that the support she received from her parents encouraged her to continue her enrollment. Finally, the counselors or instructors of Guidance 10 were cited several times throughout the interviews as a major support system, which is in agreement with earlier studies of Blum and Spangehl.

The data in this study were consistent with research by Tinto (1987) that suggests that the factors that most affected academic success were encouragement from parents and positive interactions with faculty and staff. According to Tinto, positive experiences within and outside the classroom have the biggest impact on these students and can enhance their self-esteem, give them confidence in their academic abilities and validate their knowledge and experiences.

In this study, the counselors or instructors of the guidance course were cited several times during the interviews and surveys as reasons why the students continued their enrollment in college. Furthermore, this finding supports Fidler and Hunter's (1989) research, in which they reported that the relationship students had with their professors made them more satisfied with their college experience and more likely to persist. This finding reinforces Levitz and Noel (1989) and Tinto's (1989) research, which suggests that a caring attitude and responsiveness of faculty and staff might be the most powerful resources available for improving student retention and success.

According to Gordon and Grites (1984) and Naretto (1995), nontraditional students need more initial contact, guidance and a supportive community in comparison to traditional students, which may determine if nontraditional students persist at an

institution. Gordon and Grites found that freshman seminar courses are an effective way of providing structure and support for nontraditional students. A few of the respondents in the study were re-entry, nontraditional students and they concurred with the research of Gordon and Grites (1984) and Naretto (1995). These students expressed the important role that Guidance 10 played in introducing them to the college and making them feel like a part of the campus social system.

Tinto (1985) and Terenzini and Pascarella (1977) stressed the importance of integrating freshman into the campus social system. Furthermore, the authors explained that seminar courses are a way to integrate students into campus life and assist with their transition to college. The findings in this study confirmed their research since 58% of the respondents, who were interviewed, felt more a part of the social system after taking the course. They expressed that after taking the course, they felt more comfortable and confident in their other classes. Moreover, they were encouraged to socialize with other classmates, which influenced them to be more social with other students on campus.

According to Fralisck (1993), a college orientation course is a way to provide a more in-depth opportunity for student self-exploration and career goal setting. The literature suggested the importance of career decision making in the orientation course. However, in this study the career decision making information received the lowest scores on the survey and, during the interviews, only half of the respondents indicated that career decision making influenced them to stay enrolled in college. Therefore, this information may not be an important factor in influencing students to persist or the information may not be covered thoroughly in the class.

In this study, 11 out of the 12 respondents utilized counseling services by

meeting with a counselor to develop a Student Education Plan. The respondent who did not see a counselor reported that she did not have time to see a counselor. This finding is consistent with the literature which suggests that freshmen, who used counseling services, were more likely to succeed in college than those who did not (Churchill & Iwai, 1981; Bishop, 1986; Walsh, 1985 as cited in Rayman & Garis, 1989). The majority of the respondents in the study were successful since they were currently enrolled or had graduated with a certificate or associate's degree.

Variables beyond orientation that influence retention

The majority of the respondents interviewed indicated that the orientation course did influence them to stay in college. However, 25% of the respondents left college due to personal factors not associated with their academics. These respondents had to drop out of college due to miscellaneous personal factors. One respondent had a baby, another respondent did not have the finances to pay for her education and the last respondent was not ready to commit to college. This finding is in agreement with research conducted by Tinto (1987), who reported that academic performance is not the only factor that attributes to students leaving college. The respondent, who stated that she left college due to limited financial resources to pay for college, concurs with research by Nora and Rendon (1996). According to Nora and Rendon, Federal Pell Grants had the biggest influence on retention since many students in their study had to drop out of college because they did not receive enough financial aid to cover their college costs.

Characteristics of an orientation class at a two-year college

In the literature, it was found that freshman orientation courses at two-year colleges frequently are larger, shorter in duration, less likely to be required, less varied in

course content, and rarely used as an introduction to an academic discipline (Rice & Devore, 1992). Guidance 10 was consistent with the literature except that the class sections were not large, which was probably due to the fact that the course was not mandatory.

In the study, it was found that Guidance 10 was short in duration, less varied in content and rarely used as an introduction to an academic discipline in comparison with an orientation course at a four-year university. Furthermore, Shanley and Witten (1990) suggested that a freshman seminar course should be designed to provide students with caring, student-centered instructors in small classes, which should be about 20 to 25 students. The orientation course in this study was consistent with the literature; consequently, Guidance 10 sections did vary in class size from 15-40 students but were generally 20-25 students.

Forty-two percent of the respondents attended Coral College part time whereas only 25% of them attended full time and 33% of them were no longer enrolled. This finding reinforces Brooks-Leonard's (1991) research that students who attend community colleges are much more likely to attend college part-time versus students who attend a four-year university. The author concluded that community college students are more likely not to return to college and students who attend college on a full-time basis return at a much higher rate than those who attend part-time.

Recommendations for educators

The following recommendations are made for educators who can make a difference in educational institutions and influence change in their districts that will affect the retention of new community college students.

1. Administrators are encouraged to review the findings of this study when making decisions related to retention and decisions regarding the orientation to college course in order to understand the influence an orientation course can have on retention. Administrators are encouraged to be aware of orientation issues since they are responsible for funding and overseeing orientation programs.

2. According to my analysis of the literature, faculty should co-teach the freshman seminar classes with counselors to expose new students to several faculty members. Furthermore, when faculty members make contact with new students and connect with them in the beginning of their college career, students persist at a higher rate.

3. Implementation of an orientation course at other community colleges with similar student populations should be considered since the course could potentially improve retention and the success of new community college students. The student population at Coral College has a high percentage of low-income, first-generation college students from various ethnic backgrounds and ability levels.

4. The institution must be committed to student development and retention efforts by developing policies and allocating funds for orientation to reduce attrition.

Suggestions for additional research

The following suggestions are made for additional research on the influence of an orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students.

1. Due to the limited research on orientation at the community college level, more research on retention should be conducted at the community college. The findings of this study support previous research studies by Feldman (1993) and Glass and Garrett (1995),

in which most research on retention is done at the baccalaureate level and at institutions with residential facilities consequently retention at community colleges is not well understood. Both authors concurred that there were "preexisting factors" that determined which students were most likely to drop out. Additional research should be done at the community college level to identify factors that are unique to that setting.

2. Two orientation courses at two different community colleges with similar student populations should be compared. This study would explore the differences and similarities of the two courses, which may lead to suggestions to improve the course.

3. Another suggestion would be to increase the number of students interviewed who took the course and obtain more in depth information regarding the students' experiences in the course. Furthermore, students who did not take the course could be interviewed to investigate their experiences at the college then compare them with the students who took the course to learn more about what factors influence students to persist.

This study investigated the influence of an orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. The findings of this research confirm that aspects of the course do influence the retention of new community college students. Therefore, counselors and faculty are encouraged to continue to recommend this course to new students, and administrators are advised to ensure that there are a sufficient number of sections available for new students trying to enroll in the course. Finally, the institution must make a commitment to retention and investigate various methods to retain students through some type of orientation.

REFERENCES

American Association of Community Colleges (1998). Data files [On-line]. Available: www.aacc.nche.edu

American College Personnel Associaton (1994). The student learning imperative: Implications for student affairs. Washington, DC: ACPA.

Anderson, V. M. (1999). The influence of orientation courses on the academic performance, persistence, and retention of new-to-college students (Doctoral dissertation, Golden Gate University, 1999). Dissertation Abstracts International, 60, (1A), 52.

Astin, A. W. (1975). Preventing students from dropping out. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Astin, A. W. (1985). Achieving educational excellence: A critical assessment of priorities and practices in higher education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Babbie, E. (1989). The practice of social research (5th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

Baker, R., McNeil, O., & Siryk, B. (1985). Expectation and reality in freshman adjustment to college. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 32, 94-103.

Barefoot, B., & Fidler, F. (1992). 1991 national survey of freshman seminar programming: Helping first year students climb the academic ladder. (Monograph No. 10). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the Freshman Year Experience.

Bianchino, Elizabeth (1994). The impact of a community college freshman orientation program on student persistence rate and cumulative college grade point average (Doctoral Dissertation, University of La Verne, 1994). Dissertation Abstracts International, 55, (5A), 1177.

Blum, M. E. & Spangehl, S. D. (1982). Developing Educational Programs for the High-Risk Secondary School and College Student. ERIC/CUE Urban Diversity Series, Number 80.

Brooks-Leonard, C (1991). Demographic and academic factors associated with first-to-second term retention in a two-year college. Community/Junior College Quarterly of Research and Practice, 15 (1), 57-69.

Chickering, A. W. (1969). Education and Identity. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, A. M., & Brawer, F. (1989). The American community college. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, A. M., & Brawer, F. (1996). The American community college. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cook, L. P. (1996). A description of new student orientation programs at two-year colleges in the United States (Doctoral Dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1996). Dissertation Abstracts International, 57, (2A), 560.

Cope, R., & Hannah, W. (1975). Revolving college doors: The causes and consequences of dropping out, stopping out and transferring. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Copland, B. A. (1989). Adult learners. In M. L.Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates, The freshman year experience (pp. 303-315). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). Research design qualitative and quantitative approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Feldman, M. J. (1993). Factors associated with one-year retention in a community college. Research in Higher Education, 34 (4), 503-512.

Fidler, P. P. & Hunter, M. S. (1989). How seminars enhance student success. In M. L.Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates, The freshman year experience (pp. 216-237). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fitts, C. T., & Swift, F.H. (1928). The construction of orientation course for college freshman. University of California Publications in Education, 1897-1929, 2 (3), 145-250.

Fralisck, M. A. (1993). College success. Community College Review, 20 (5), 29-36.

Gardner, J. N. (1986). The freshman experience. College and University, 61 (4), 261-274.

Gass, M. A. (1990). The longitudinal influences of an adventure orientation program on the retention of students. Journal of College Student Development, 31 (1), 33-38.

Gerdes, H., & Mallinckrodt, B. (1994). Emotional, social and academic

adjustment of college students: A longitudinal study of retention. Journal of Counseling & Development, 72, 281-288.

Glass Jr., J. C. & Garrett, M. S. (1995). Student participation in a college orientation course, retention, and grade point average. Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 19, 117-132.

Gordon, V. N. & Grites, T. J. (1984). The freshman seminar course: Helping students succeed. Journal of College Student Personnel, 25 (4), 315-320.

Hurtado, S., Carter, D. F., & Spuler, A. (1996). Latino student transition to college: Assessing difficulties and factors in successful college adjustment. Research in Higher Education, 37 (2), 135-157.

Jacobs, B. (1993). Orienting diverse populations. In M. L. Upcraft & Others (Eds.), Designing successful transitions: A guide for orienting students to college (pp. 79-96). Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience.

Jewler, A. J. (1989). Elements of an effective seminar: The university 101 program. In M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates, The freshman year experience (pp. 198-215). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Johnson, J. L. (1997). Commuter college students: What factors determine who will persist and who will drop out? College Student Journal, 31, 323-332.

Levitz, R. & Noel, L. (1989). Connecting students to institutions: Keys to retention and success. In M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates, The freshman year experience (pp. 65-81). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Marlow, C. (1989). Identifying the problems and needs of nontraditional students at your institution. NASPA Journal, 26 (4).

Martin, W. E., Swartz-Kulstad, J. L., & Madson, M. (1999). Psychosocial factors that predict the college adjustment of first-year undergraduate students: Implications for college counselors. Journal of College Counseling, 2, 121-133.

McGrath, M., & Braunstein, A. (1997). The predication of freshman attrition: An examination of the importance of certain demographic, academic, financial and social factors. College Student Journal, 31, 396-407.

Naretto, J. A. (1995). Adult student retention: The influence of internal and external communities. NASPA Journal, 32 (2), 90-97.

Noel, L. (1985). Increasing student retention: New challenges and potential. In L. Noel, R. Levitz, & D. Saluri (Eds.) Increasing student retention (pp. 1-27). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Noel, L., Levitz, R., & Saluri, D. (1991). Increasing student retention. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Nora, A., & Rendon, L. (1996). Hispanic student retention in community colleges: Reconciling access with outcomes. In C. Turner, M. Garcia, A. Nora & L. Rendon (Eds.), Racial and ethnic diversity in higher education (pp. 269-280). Needham Heights, MA: Simon & Schuster Custom Publishing.

Office of Civil Rights (2001). Data files [On-line]. Available: www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/raceoverview.html

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1979). Interaction influences in Spady's and Tinto's conceptual model of college dropout. Sociology of Education, 52, 197-210.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). How college affects students. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Patton, Michael Q. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd edition). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Perigo, D. J., & Upcraft, M. L. (1989). Orientation programs. In M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates, The freshman year experience (pp. 82-94). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Quintana, S. M., Vogel, M. C., & Ybarra, V. C. (1991). Meta-analysis of Latino students' adjustment in higher education. Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Science, 13 (2), 155-168.

Rayman, J. R. & Garis, J. W. (1989). Counseling. In M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates, The freshman year experience (pp. 129-141). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rice, R., & Devore, J. (1992). Extended orientation courses at two-year colleges. Community/Junior College Quarterly, 16 (3), 221-30.

Rickinson, B., & Rutherford, D. (1995). Increasing undergraduate student retention rates. British Journal of Guidance and Counseling, 23, 161-172.

Schwitzer, A. M., McGovern, T. V., & Robbins, S. B. (1991). Adjustment outcomes of a freshman seminar: A utilization-focused approach. Journal of College Student Development, 32, 484-489.

Shanley, M. G., & Witten, C. H. (1990). University 101 freshman seminar course: A longitudinal study of persistence, retention and graduation rates. NASPA Journal, 27 (4), 344-352.

Spady, W. (1970). Dropouts from higher education: An interdisciplinary review and synthesis. Interchange, 2, 38-62.

Stupka, E. H. (1986). Student Persistence and Achievement: An Evaluation of the Influences of an Extended Orientation Course. Research report. California: Sacramento City College.

Terenzini & Pascarella (1977). Voluntary Freshman Attrition and Patterns of Social and Academic Integration in a University: A Test of a Conceptual Model. Research in Higher Education, 6 (1), 25-43.

Thorton, J. (1972). The community junior college. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Tinto, V. (1985). Dropping out and other forms of withdrawal from college. In L. Noel, R. Levitz, D. Saluri, & Associates (Eds.), Increasing student retention (pp.28-43). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Tinto, V. (1987). Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tinto, V. (1989, September 6). Misconceptions mar campus discussions of student retention. The Chronicle of Higher Education, 36, 132.

Tinto, V. (1993). Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (2000).

Upcraft, M. L., & Gardner, J. (1989). The freshman year experience: Helping students survive and succeed in college. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Higher Education Series.

Upcraft, M. L., & Garder, J. N. (1989). A comprehensive approach to enhancing freshman success. In M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates, The freshman year experience: Helping students survive and succeed in college (pp. 1-12). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Upcraft, M. L. (1993). Orienting today's students. In M. L. Upcrafte & Others (Eds.), Designing successful transitions: A guide for orienting students to college (pp. 1-8). Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience.

Vaughan, G. B. & Associates (1983). Issues for community college leaders in a new era. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Weissman, J., Bulakowski, C., & Jumisko, M. (1998). A study of white, black and Hispanic students' transition to a community college. Community College Review, 26 (2), 19-35.

Wilder, J. R. (1983). Retention in higher education. Psychology: A Quarterly Journal of Human Behavior, 20, 4-9

Williams, John (1999). San Joaquin Delta College Student Handbook.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF GUIDANCE 10 STUDENTS

SURVEY OF GUIDANCE 10 STUDENTS

The purpose of this survey is to examine the effectiveness of an orientation course on new community college students. Results of this survey will be used for a doctoral dissertation and to improve the effectiveness of an orientation course for new students. To preserve your anonymity, do not put your name on this survey. Please answer the following questions on the front and back of this survey then return it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope by September 30, 2001.

Part I: Course Objectives:

The following are a list of course objectives for Guidance 10.
Answer the following questions by using the scale below.

	3 = A great deal	2 = Somewhat	1 = Not at all
1. You benefited from the information presented. Comments:_____	3	2	1
2. You were able to demonstrate knowledge of the admissions, assessment and registration process. Comments:_____	3	2	1
3. You were able to make appropriate decisions relative to the development of a Student Education Plan. Comments:_____	3	2	1
4. You were able to demonstrate knowledge of the Associate Degree, certificate and transfer programs that lead to baccalaureate degrees. Comments:_____	3	2	1
5. You were able to demonstrate an entry level understanding of assessing interests, values and skills relative to an educational or career goal. Comments:_____	3	2	1
6. You were able to access and effectively utilize the college catalog, schedule of classes, student handbook and other college publications. Comments:_____	3	2	1
7. You were able to access appropriate student support services. Comments:_____	3	2	1

Part II: Course Outline

The following are a list of various topics that were discussed in Guidance 10. Rate these topics by using the scale below.

4 = Excellent	3 = Good	2 = Satisfactory	1=Poor
4	3	2	1
4	3	2	1
4	3	2	1
4	3	2	1
4	3	2	1
4	3	2	1
4	3	2	1

1. Campus Tour
2. Student Services & Financial Aid
3. Information on Career Decision Making
4. Student Education Plan & Meeting with a Counselor
5. College Survival Skills (study skills, time management, etc.)
6. Certificate, Associate Degree & Transfer Requirements
7. Registration Information

Part III: Background Information

1. _____ Male _____ Female

2. _____ Age

3. Current Grade Point Average (Circle one): 1.0-1.9 2.0-2.5 2.6-3.0 3.1-3.5 3.6-4.0

4. Units I Have Completed (Circle one): 1-15 16-30 31-45 46-60. 60+

5. I Have Completed (Circle one): Certificate A.A/A.S. Transfer Requirements

Please feel free to comment on any aspect of the course that influenced you to continue your enrollment at Coral College? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your participation in this survey.
Please return this survey by September 30, 2001 in the envelope provided to:
Stacey Robles, Counselor
Danner Hall 205, Guidance & Counseling Department.
Please call Stacey Robles, Counselor, (209) 956-5201 if you have any questions.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PREVIOUSLY ENROLLED STUDENTS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PREVIOUSLY ENROLLED STUDENTS

The students in this study were asked to provide information regarding the following topics: (a) personal data, (b) elements of a successful orientation program, (c) the influence of Guidance 10 on retention, (d) the influence of Guidance 10 on grade point average, (e) variables beyond orientation that influence retention, and (f) environmental contexts of two and four-year colleges. As the interviews progressed, additional questions may have been asked; nevertheless, at a minimum, the following questions were asked:

Personal Data

- When was your last semester at Coral College?
- How many semesters or years did you attend Coral College?
- What made you decide to enroll in college and take courses?
- What were your academic and career goals?
- Did you complete your academic and career goals? If not, why?
- When did you decide to drop out of college?
- Did you attend college part time (6 unit or less) or full time (12 units or more)? Did you work part time (20 hours or less) or full time?

Elements of a Successful Orientation Program

- Which semester did you take Guidance 10, Orientation to College?
- What did you learn in the class that was useful? How was it useful?
- What did you learn in the class that was not useful? Why?
- How did learning about certificate, Associate degree and transfer requirements affect your decision to stay or withdraw from college?

- How did the student services and financial aid presentation affect your decision to stay or withdraw from college?

- How did the information on career decision making affect your decision to stay or withdraw from college?

- How did meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan affect your decision to stay or withdraw from college?

- How did learning college survival skills such as study skills and time management affect your decision to stay or withdraw from college?

The influence of Guidance 10 on retention

- What was it about Guidance 10 that did or did not influence you to stay in college?

The influence of Guidance 10 on grade point average

- What was it about Guidance 10 that did or did not influence your grade point average?

Variables beyond orientation that influence retention

- What personal or school related factors affected your decision to stay enrolled or withdraw from college?

- Did the orientation class make you feel a part of the campus social system? Why or why not?

- What did you like about the course? Why?

- What did you dislike about the course? Why?

Environmental Contexts of Two and Four-year Colleges

- Approximately how many weeks was your orientation course? How did the duration of the course influence your understanding of the course materials?

- Guidance 10 is not a required course. Why did you take Guidance 10?

- Approximately how many students were in your Guidance 10 class? How did the size of the course influence your understanding of the course material?

Concluding Questions

- If we were to redesign this course and you were asked to help - What information would you include and what would you not include?
- What additional information would you have liked to receive in this class?
- Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience in Guidance 10?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS

The students in this study were asked to provide information regarding the following topics: (a) personal data, (b) elements of a successful orientation program, (c) the influence of Guidance 10 on retention, (d) the influence of Guidance 10 on grade point average, (e) variables beyond orientation that influence retention, and (f) environmental contexts of two and four-year colleges. As the interviews progressed, additional questions may have been asked; nevertheless, at a minimum, the following questions were asked:

Personal Data

- How long (semesters or years) have you been attending Coral College?
- What made you decide to enroll in college and take courses?
- What are your academic and career goals?
- Do you attend college part time (6 unit or less) or full time (12 units or more)? Do you work part time (20 hours or less) or full time?

Elements of a Successful Orientation Program

- Which semester did you take Guidance 10, Orientation to College?
- What did you learn in the class that was useful? How was it useful?
- What did you learn in the class that was not useful? Why?
- How did learning about certificate, Associate degree and transfer requirements affect your decision to stay in college?
- How did the student services and financial aid presentation affect your decision to stay in college?
- How did the information on career decision making affect your decision to stay in college?

- How did meeting with a counselor and developing a Student Education Plan affect your decision to stay in college?

- How did learning college survival skills such as study skills and time management affect your decision to stay in college?

The influence of Guidance 10 on retention

- What was it about Guidance 10 that did or did not influence you to stay in college?

The influence of Guidance 10 on grade point average

- What was it about Guidance 10 that did or did not influence your grade point average?

Variables beyond orientation that influence retention

- What personal or school related factors affected your decision to stay enrolled in college?

- Did the orientation class make you feel a part of the campus social system?

- What did you like about the course? Why?

- What did you dislike about the course? Why?

Environmental Contexts of Two and Four-year Colleges

- Approximately how many weeks was your orientation course? How did the duration of the course influence your understanding of the course materials?

- Guidance 10 is not a required course. Why did you take Guidance 10?

- Approximately how many students were in your Guidance 10 class? How did the size of the course influence your understanding of the course material?

Concluding Questions

- If we were to redesign this course and you were asked to help - What information would you include and what would you not include?

- What additional information would you have liked to receive in this class?

- Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience in Guidance 10?

APPENDIX D

CREDIT COURSE OUTLINE

CREDIT COURSE OUTLINE

Office of Instruction

Date: 3/1/88

Department Number: Guidance 10 Submitted by :

Title of Course: Orientation to College Approved by: ___

Prerequisites: Not open to students who have completed Guid 11a and Guid 11b.

Catalog Statement: This course, recommended for all entering and re-entry students, provides orientation, counseling and advisement for students. It assists students in the development of an educational plan through individual and group counseling. Guid 10 is equivalent to the combined courses of Guid 11a and Guid 11b.

This course is _x_ is not ____ associate degree appropriate.

Textbook: Student Handbook

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

General Aims:

1. To become familiar with the matriculation process at Coral College.
2. To understand the college organization structure and time tables.
3. To become aware of the various student support services available on campus and in the community.
4. To be able to identify and compare the different programs available.
5. To be able to evaluate personal characteristics and objectives relative to educational goals.

Specific Objectives:

1. To understand the admission and registration process.
2. To develop skills using the college catalog.
3. To develop a tentative four-semester student educational course plan (SEP).
4. To differentiate Associate in Arts degrees, Vocational and Certificate programs, and transfer programs.
5. To assess interest, values, and skills relative to an educational goal.
6. To select appropriate support services; financial aid, tutoring, student activities, computer lab, re-entry, EOPS, library, assessment center, etc.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

COURSE OUTLINE:

1. Matriculation Process
   a. Application for Admission
   b. Assessment
   c. Counseling/Advising
   d. Course Registration

2. Registration Process
   a. Priority Registration
   b. Late Registration
   c. Add/Withdraw from Classes

3. Graduation Requirements
   a. General Education/Breadth
   b. Major
   c. Other Electives

4. Educational Alternatives at
   a. Vocational and certificate programs
   b. Associate in Arts Degree
   c. Upgrade Job Skills
   d. Transfer Programs
      1. University of California
      2. California State Universities
      3. Private Universities

5. Interpretation of Aptitude/Skills and Interests
   a. Aptitude tests: CGP, SAT, ACT, ASVAB
   b. Interest tests: Strong Campbell, Career Assessment Inventory, SIGI, EUREKA

6. Four-Semester Student Educational Course Plan (SEP)
   a. Prerequisites
   b. Scheduling

7. Student Handbook
8. College Survival Skills
9. Support and Resource Services

Evaluation:

1. Participation in class discussion
2. Completion of an appropriate written tentative four-semester student educational course plan (SEP)
3. Completion of homework assignments
4. Written final examination

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT FORM TEMPLATE

Informed Consent Form for Student Participation

The Influence of a Freshman Orientation Course on the Academic Performance and Retention of New Community College Students

You are invited to participate in a research study, which will examine the influence of a freshman orientation course on the academic performance and retention of new community college students. I am a student at the University of the Pacific, School of Education. This research will be used in conjunction with my dissertation. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you took Guidance 10, Orientation to College, during fall 1996 - fall 1999 and met the study's criteria.

If you decide to participate, please fill out the enclosed survey that will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Then, return the survey and this consent form to the Counseling Department at Coral College, Danner Hall 205 in the self-addressed envelope.

There are no risks involved for participants. The benefits of your participation in this study are that the results of this study will be used to improve the Guidance 10 course.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and your decision whether or not to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you have any questions about this research at any time, please call Stacey Robles, Counselor at Coral College (209) 956-5201 or Dr. Phyllis Hensley, (209) 946-2670. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research project, or in the event of a research related injury, please call the Graduate School Office, UOP, 946-2261. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Your signature below indicates that: (1) you have read and understand the information provided above, (2) you willingly agree to participate in this study, (3) you may withdraw your consent at anytime and discontinue participation at anytime without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, (4) you will receive a copy of this form, and (5) you are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F

STUDENTS WHO DID AND DID NOT COMPLETE GUIDANCE 10

Table 4. Students Who Did and Did Not Complete Guidance 10.

Students Who Did Not Take Guidance 10.

Student	Units Completed	GPA	Degrees Completed
1	23	1.85	0
2	45	1.86	0
3	55	3.23	0
4	14	1.67	0
5	51.5	2.41	0
6	14	1.65	0
7	67.5	3.48	0
8	46.5	1.96	0
9	14	1.2	0
10	3.5	4.0	0
11	23.5	2.69	0
12	11.5	2.1	0
13	0	0	0
14	17.5	3.4	0
15	35	1.96	0
16	30.5	2.25	0
17	7	.43	0
18	8.5	1.4	0
19	20.5	1.67	0
20	13.5	2.53	0
21	1.5	0	0
22	0	0	0
23	0	0	0
24	25	2.3	0
25	78	2.48	0
26	16	.95	0
27	0	0	0
28	3.5	0	0
29	3	0	0
30	.5	0	0
Averages	21 Units	1.58 GPA	0 Degrees

Students Who Completed Guidance 10.

Student	Units Completed	GPA	Degrees Completed
1	44	2.66	0
2	20.5	1.33	0
3	34	2.02	0
4	23	2.15	0
5	45	3.36	0
6	98.5	2.75	1
7	57.5	2.83	0
8	10	2.08	0
9	5	.71	0
10	12	2.42	0
11	119.5	1.43	0
12	21	1.94	0
13	1	.14	0
14	27.5	2.29	0
15	33.5	3.42	0
16	3.5	1.07	0
17	68	2.62	0
18	22.5	2.19	0
19	1	.60	0
20	1	0	0
21	41.5	1.94	0
22	7	2.29	0
23	43.5	3.43	0
24	23	2.28	0
25	27.5	2.17	0
26	7	1.38	0
27	2.5	.84	0
28	51	3.67	0
29	4	2.0	0
30	3.5	0	0
Averages	25 Units	1.93 GPA	1 Degree

Attn: Kyle McJunkin

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: The Influence of a Freshman Orientation Course on The Academic Performance and Retention of New Community College Students	
Author(s): Stacey Y. Robles	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date: May 2002

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☒

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☐

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature: Stacey Robles	Printed Name/Position/Title: Stacey Robles / Counselor
Organization/Address: Delta Community College 5151 Pacific Ave Stockton, Ca 95207	Telephone: 209-954-5879 FAX: 209-954-5600
	E-Mail Address: Date: 9/17/03

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, *or*, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC®
Clearinghouse For
Community Colleges

University of California, Los Angeles
3051 Moore Hall
Box 951521
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521

EE 45

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
WWW: http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com

EFF-088 (Rev. 2/2000)